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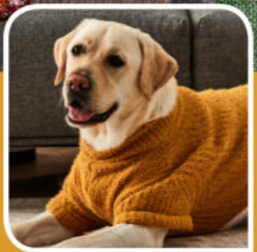
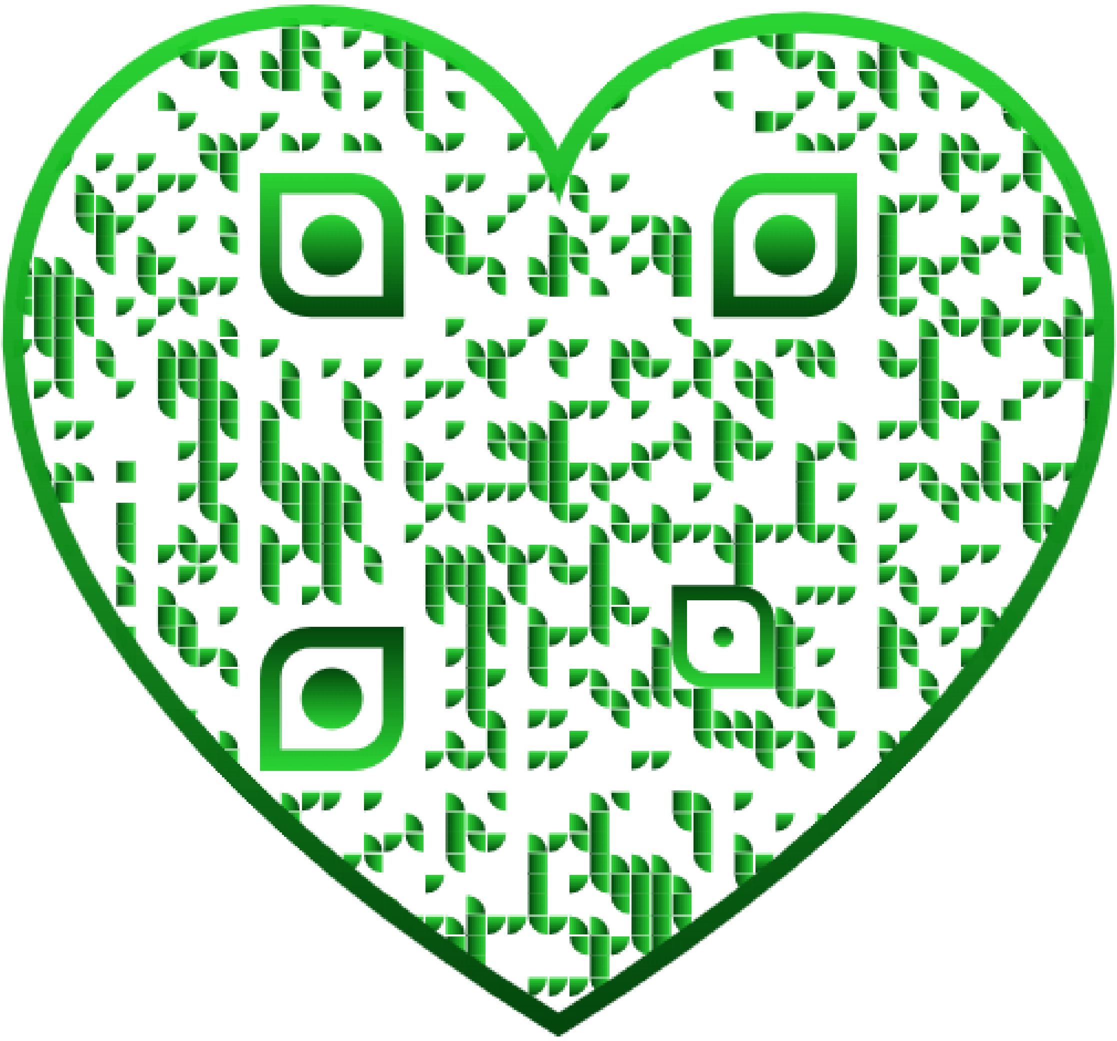


*SEE PAGE 13



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The cosy issue

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- Make a quilt
+WINTER PUZZLE SPECIAL
SLEEP BETTER WITH PLANTS & THE MOON! ▸
MAKE A DOG JUMPER WITH A THRIFTY FIND! ▸

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TRADIE OF THE YEAR 2025
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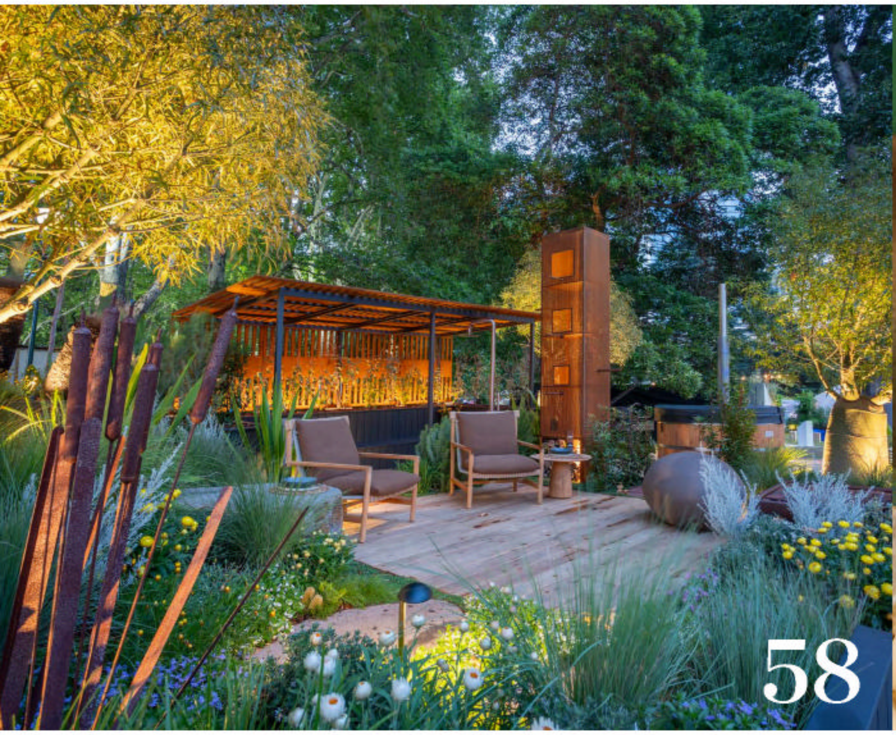
TRADIE OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

Tradies come with big hearts and awesome skills. Meet our 2025 winners, brought to you by Witzer, on page 124.

Cover photography Tim Roberts; styling Lucy Busuttil



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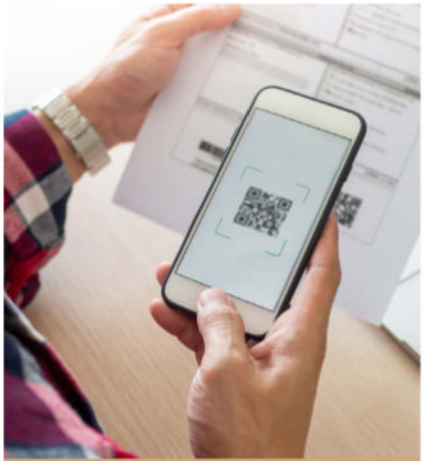

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FOOD

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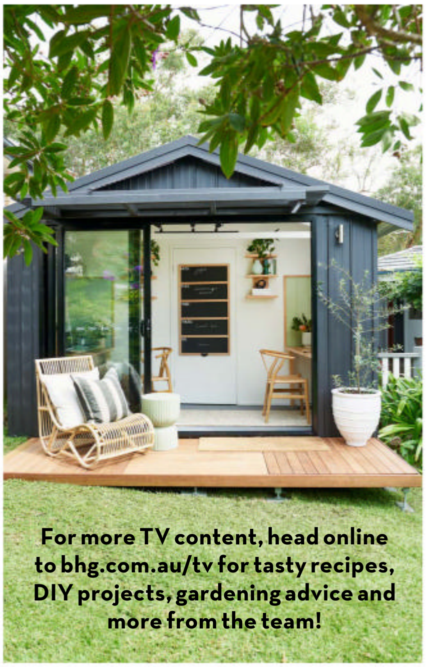

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Wrapped *in warmth*

Welcome to our first-ever *Cosy* issue. It's a celebration of warmth, comfort and the little rituals that help us slow down and feel at home.

Cosiness means different things to different people. For some, it's a crackling fire or a steaming mug in hand. For others, it's connection – with loved ones, neighbours, pets or simply with yourself.

In this issue, we explore the idea of comfort in many forms: from sleep health and warming meals to caring for your community and creating a haven at home.

For me, cosiness is the peace and cocoon-like warmth of a Sunday morning tucked in bed, when the world pauses long enough for a few extra presses of the snooze button. It's warm clothes fresh from the dryer, or the first sip of a steaming cup of tea that chases the chill away. A pet curled up on your lap while you get lost in a good read.

These little comforts remind me how fortunate I am to seek warmth not out of necessity, but as a quiet luxury. It's a sign that my basic needs are met, and there's space to soften into the season. At its heart, being cosy is about feeling safe enough to seek comfort. It's the luxury of slowing down, of allowing yourself to rest, recharge and savour the gentler side of life. And really, couldn't we all do with a bit more of that?

When it comes to food, whether it's the memory of licking the bowl from Mum's chocolate cake, or learning Dad's "from heart" rice pudding, we turn to dishes that fill more than just our bellies. In this issue, you'll find both nostalgic treats and nourishing winter warmers. Think hearty soups, rich bakes and everything in between.

I'd love to hear what cosy means to you (drop us a letter, page 16), and I hope this issue brings you inspiration to make the most of this season. At home, in the garden, and within your community.

So grab a cuppa, wrap yourself in something soft, and settle in. This month, let's get cosy.

Megan

Megan Osborne
Editor

WE'RE LOVING

I can't wait to use the downloadable knit and crochet favourites (p13). My mum's teaching me how to crochet, so we'll have lots of fun making these together.

JADE COULL
Senior content producer

I love the *Souper Heroes* story (p68). I enjoy making soups in winter, with a side of crunchy toasted sourdough. So warming for the body and soul.

MONIQUE LARRACY
Design director

The feature on warm lighting (p52) has inspired me to upgrade some of my lamps this winter to make my unit super cosy!

SARAH MURPHY
Senior food editor

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EDITOR'S PICKS TO

hibernate

This issue is about being warm, snug and a little bit indulgent. Here are my top picks to satisfy that comfort craving.

1. Swissmar Biel Fondue 11-piece set in Copper, from Kitchen Warehouse, $289. Throw back to retro with this classic table centrepiece, perfect for winter weather. Be it cheese or chocolate, I think fondue is set to have a comeback.

2. Nora bedroom chair, from Harvey Norman, $599. The textured boucle fabric on this cushioned armchair makes it the ideal reading spot.

3. Pom Pom sherpa-lined crew socks, from Target, $12. A cosy Sunday with a mug of hot chocolate and a good book never looked so good, especially when you've slipped into these super-soft socks. Complete the picture with a heated throw (find the perfect fit on page 46).

4. Ugg Classic Mini Boots (water resistant), from The Iconic, $145. When the mercury drops, you need to cover your extremities. A slide-on slipper just won't do the trick at this time of year. Opt for a fuzzy over-the-ankle option!

5. Tonic Heat Pillow in Dusty Rose faux fur, from Myer, $40. What's better than a toasty heat pack to wrap around your neck or lower back? A faux fur, ridiculously snuggly version!

6. al.ive body Edit Your Ritual: Five Steps,$303. Don't let dry skin in winter get you down. This beautifully nourishing, five-step skincare set from interior designers Alisa and Lysandra Fraser's al.ive body has been taking care of my skin this frosty season.

7. Haigh's Milk Hot Chocolate Cubes, $14.50 for a pack of 4. To celebrate World Chocolate Day, Haigh's is releasing limited edition fluffy marshmallow cubes with rich dark chocolate ganache, coated in milk chocolate. Simply drop this little package into hot milk of your choice. It melts to create the most velvety, indulgent hot chocolate you've ever had. Available from July 7 until sold out.

8. Best Friends by Sheri Donut Shag Bed, from Pet Circle, $227.99. If you're lucky, your pet is a cuddler. But if not, make sure they still have their own cosy options, like this extra-large dog bed. With its generous size, maybe they can scooch on over and share their snuggle spot for some extra warmth on a wintry day. ■

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Fill your kitchen with the sweet, warm scent of cinnamon. See page 74.

Better Homes and Gardens.

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Contributors

Meet the creatives who brought their skills and insights to this issue.

Star-crossed SLEEP

◀ NATASHA WEBER

Astrologer

You may recognise astrologer Natasha Weber from her spots on Seven's *The Morning Show* and in *Marie Claire* Australia. On page 154, she shares some cosmic wisdom about the moon's mysterious influence on when and how we sleep (or dream)!

▲ JP URIZAR

Photographer

Photographer John Paul 'JP' Urizar has a way of choreographing light that brings amazing emotion to images. His work features in magazines from *Gourmet Traveller* to *The Australian Women's Weekly*, and on page 103 you can see how JP and stylist Nonci Nyoni created three different 'cosy' looks. It's just gorgeous.

chic

MELODY LORD ▶

Crafter

Melody Lord is a book editor, wordsmith, knitting book author and lifelong crafter. She was thrilled to combine her hobbies and professional skills to create a clever dog jumper for this issue (see page 114). Melody is also preserving craft history in her work with the National Library of Australia, reviving vintage knits and crochet using patterns from online archive Trove.

sweater weather

> “For this issue I enjoyed the challenge of figuring out how to upcycle a snuggly op-shop jumper to make a vest for Arnie. I hope there'll be lots of dogs feeling cosy this winter as a result.”
>
> MELODY LORD

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Write to us

From tips, tricks and projects to your greatest stories, we'd love to hear from you.

Letter of the month

I just wanted to say how much I enjoyed reading about Sarah Murphy's journey to creating what my father has officially dubbed "the best cake ever", in the June issue. The recipe was multi-layered but explained so well. It turned out just like the cover!

I made the Easy 'Iced VoVo' Pie for my daughter Rose's 8th birthday. We brought it with us to our local RSL for dinner with cousins, aunties and uncles. Because there were 13 of us, I made double and it still turned out perfectly. I was pretty chuffed to see that the RSL staff put the cakes on display in the dessert cake cabinet. They looked very professional alongside their fancy cheesecakes and mud cakes. We were worried we would come back after dinner to find slices removed. Thankfully we didn't but they did get some requests!

Thank you to all the effort perfecting this recipe, Sarah. It's definitely going to be on request for future birthdays and possibly even Christmas! It reminded me of Julia Child's quote, "a party without cake is just a meeting" – this cake takes nostalgic party feels to the next level.

– ***Millicent***

Happy Birthday

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+27 SIMPLE RECIPES

Slice of Heaven
THE MISSION? CREATE A SHOW-STOPPING PIE THAT LOOKS IMPRESSIVE BUT IS TOTALLY DOABLE

CONGRATULATIONS!
Millicent, we loved hearing how *BHG* inspired your celebrations. Enjoy these Sennheiser headphones with superior sound, comfort and long battery life.

Well-knit memories

My mum put me on to *Better Homes and Gardens* magazine so many years ago. We cooked so many recipes that were big hits, even when they weren't Maltese recipes that had been handed down! Mum would always go straight to the knitting patterns and me to the crocheting. We tried to teach each other what we were good at, but Mum being left-handed and me right-handed, we just ended up in stitches (excuse the pun).

As Mum got older, the only thing that really kept her going was her knitting. When she passed, she hadn't finished the squares that she had knitted to be sewn together for my blanket. I mean, I can knit, but very slowly. In hospital, before her passing, she asked me to bring in her knitting bag. She then handed it to me and asked me to finish the seven squares. Inside I was screaming, but I decided to knit while visiting her. Thinking she was sleeping, I would start. I'm pretty sure she had one eye open on me at all times! I would be halfway through a square and she would say "a bit loose" or "maybe another colour?".

The times we shared were amazing and after Mum passed, I had to sort through all her personal things. I came across a folder that she had put together and most of the patterns were from the BHG magazines. I gave these to my niece in England – she is the second biggest knitter I know and definitely needs warm clothes over there for her family.

So, from the bottom of our hearts, thank you BHG for the ideas, laughs and blankets that came out of our special times together.

– ***Marie***

Crafty read

I have just read the June issue of BHG and was so delighted reading the article about Reta Beattie (*The Fabric of a Lifetime*). What a treasure she is! The beautiful simplicity of home arts – baking, cooking pickles, making new clothes from old. What a lucky girl Florence is to have you in her life. Thank you for a lovely read on a Sunday afternoon!

– ***Elizabeth***

Sunny inspiration

I sat down on a backyard chair under the autumn sky and enjoyed the sun warming me as I opened my BHG magazine. In my mind I began to taste recipes for delicate sandwiches (I could try that) and imagined the perfume of an apple streusel cake (gotta give that a go) sitting on my kitchen bench.

On through the pages I journeyed, enjoying the luscious photographs of crafts and flower arts, marvelling at the talents shown and generously shared, the stories, the creativity. Then flicking forward to the garden pages as bees hum busily in my own garden. I can't cover it all in a couple of lazy Sunday hours so, happily, I mark the page I'm up to and take relaxation and inspiration into the rest of my day.

Practical stuff, helpful stuff, stories to delight, everything written and presented so beautifully. Thanks, BHG.

– ***Heather***

Something brand new

For many years I've been a *Better Homes and Gardens* subscriber. I've tried many ideas from the pages within. I've made quilts and cushions, paintings and print. Kept grandkids happy with paint, craft and ink. I've tried making your cakes, made many mistakes and fed family and friends with ideas that never seem to end.

Let's not forget the garden and projects outside with plantings and produce, the harvest never ending, raised garden beds to ease the tyranny of age and resist all the bending.

I'll give anything a go because your magazine shows just how easy it is to turn things around, have fun and try something new and different.

I look forward to my monthly deliveries well before they're due, for my next dose of "I'll have a go at that, something brand new."

Thank you, *Better Homes* (*and Gardens*, too!).

– ***Judy***

UP FOR GRABS

FOR READERS

Ninja Combi 14-in-1 Multicooker

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Our favourite reader email will receive this all-in-one multicooker, with settings including oven, air fryer, steam, grill, toast, prove and more!

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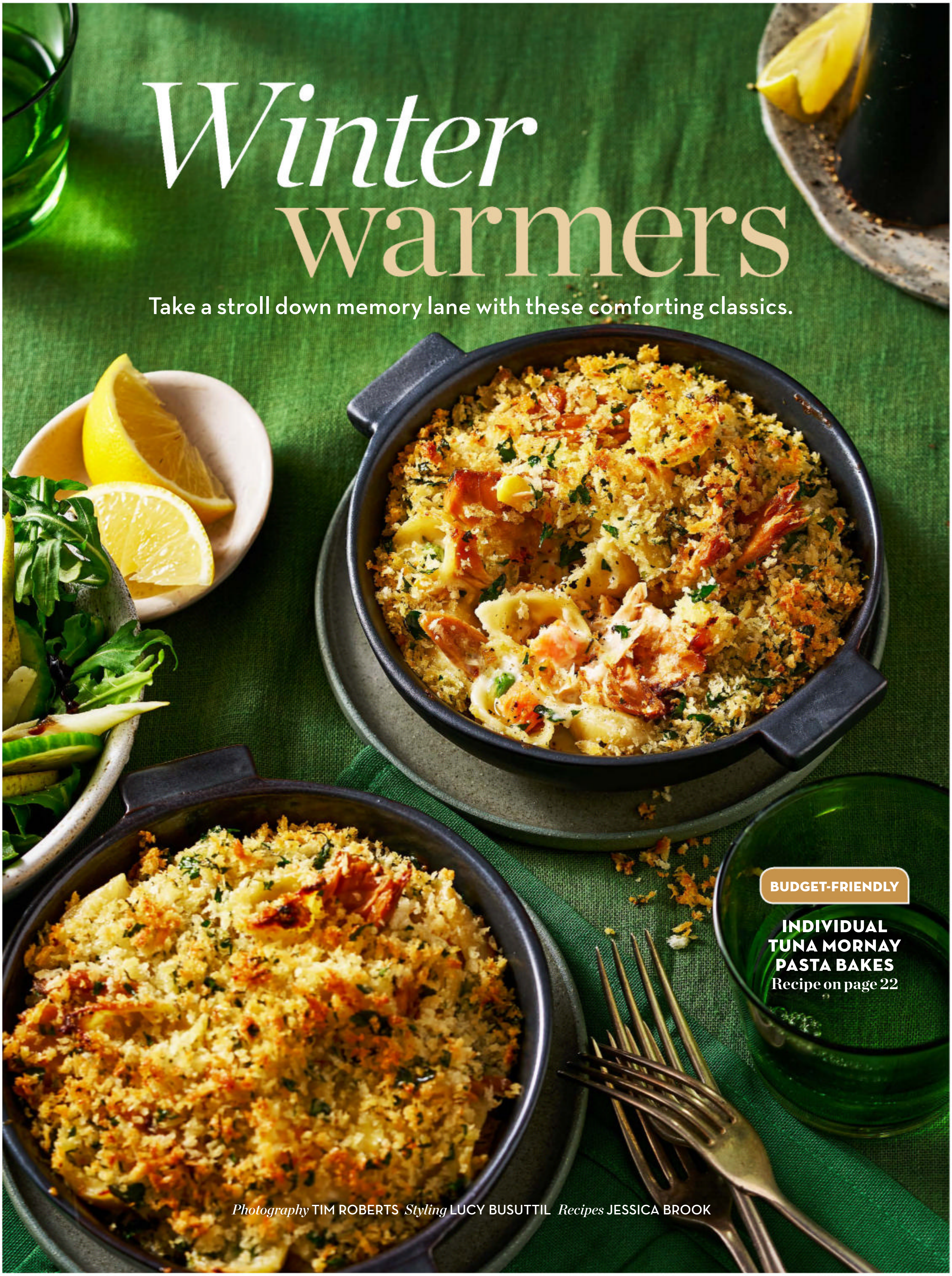
Winter warmers

Take a stroll down memory lane with these comforting classics.



BUDGET-FRIENDLY

INDIVIDUAL TUNA MORNAY PASTA BAKES

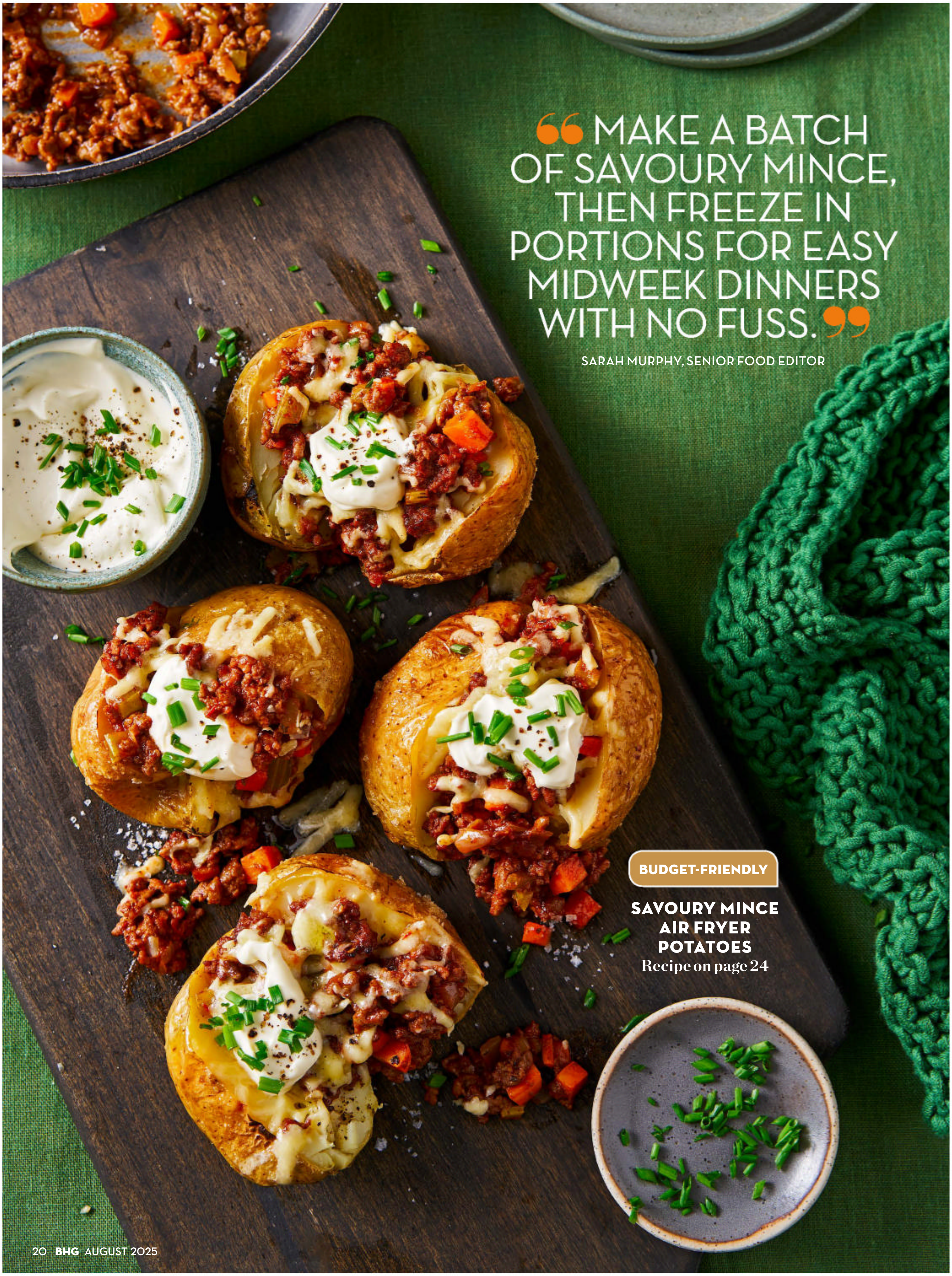
Recipe on page 22

Photography TIM ROBERTS *Styling* LUCY BUSUTTIL *Recipes* JESSICA BROOK

MEAT-FREE

ROASTED PUMPKIN FAMILY QUICHE

Recipe on page 22



> “MAKE A BATCH OF SAVOURY MINCE, THEN FREEZE IN PORTIONS FOR EASY MIDWEEK DINNERS WITH NO FUSS.”

SARAH MURPHY, SENIOR FOOD EDITOR

BUDGET-FRIENDLY

SAVOURY MINCE AIR FRYER POTATOES

Recipe on page 24

CHEAT'S AIR FRYER CHICKEN KIEV

Recipe on page 24

ROASTED PUMPKIN FAMILY QUICHE

Preparation time 30 mins plus resting
Cooking time 1 hour 45 mins
Serves 6–8

550g Kent pumpkin, cut into 3cm pieces
1 red onion, cut into wedges
½ tsp smoked paprika
1 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
60g baby spinach leaves, chopped
300g tub marinated feta, drained and coarsely crumbled
8 free-range eggs, lightly whisked
¾ cup thickened cream
½ cup milk
¼ cup finely grated parmesan
Mixed salad leaves and basil, to serve

SHORTCRUST PASTRY

2 cups plain flour
225g chilled unsalted butter, chopped
1 free-range egg
1 egg yolk (from free-range egg)
1-1½ Tbsp iced water

STEP 1 To make shortcrust pastry, put flour and butter in a food processor and process until mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Add egg, egg yolk and water and process until dough just comes together. Turn onto a lightly floured surface and gently knead until smooth. Shape into a rectangle. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes to rest.
STEP 2 Meanwhile, preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan-forced. Line a baking tray with baking paper. Arrange pumpkin and onion on tray. Sprinkle with paprika, drizzle with oil and season. Bake for 20–25 minutes or until tender. Set aside to cool slightly.
STEP 3 Roll out pastry on lightly floured surface to a 4mm-thick rectangle. Line a greased 20cm x 30cm lamington pan with baking paper, letting edges overhang by 3cm, then line with pastry. Use a small sharp knife to trim edges. Discard excess pastry. Refrigerate for 15 minutes to rest.
STEP 4 Line pastry with baking paper. Fill with pastry weights or uncooked rice. Put on a baking tray. Bake for 15 minutes. Remove paper and weights and bake for 10–15 minutes or until pastry is light golden. Set aside to cool.
STEP 5 Arrange pumpkin, onion, spinach and feta in the pastry case. Whisk egg, cream, milk and parmesan in a medium bowl. Season. Pour into case. Bake for 45–50 minutes or until the quiche centre is just set. Set aside to cool slightly, then slice and serve with mixed salad and basil.

INDIVIDUAL TUNA MORNAY PASTA BAKES

Preparation time 20 mins
Cooking time 40 mins
Serves 4

200g dried shell pasta
1½ cups frozen mixed vegetables (see Cook's Tip)
30g unsalted butter, plus 10g extra
¼ cup plain flour
1 cup pouring cream
1½ cups milk
1 cup grated tasty cheese
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
425g can tuna in olive oil, drained and flaked
1 cup panko breadcrumbs
⅓ cup finely grated parmesan
1 Tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley

ROCKET AND PEAR SALAD

120g baby rocket
1 firm packham pear, thinly sliced
1 lebanese cucumber, thinly sliced
2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 Tbsp balsamic glaze
Shaved parmesan, to serve

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan-forced. Cook pasta in a saucepan of salted boiling water for 6–8 minutes or until al dente. Add frozen vegetables in last minute. Refresh and drain.
STEP 2 Melt butter in a small saucepan on medium heat. Add flour. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute or until bubbling. Remove from heat. Gradually whisk in cream and milk. Return to heat. Cook, stirring constantly, for 2–3 minutes or until sauce boils and thickens. Remove from heat. Stir in cheese. Season.
STEP 3 Transfer to a large bowl and stir in tuna, pasta and vegetables. Spoon mixture into four 15cm round (base measurement) ovenproof dishes.
STEP 4 Melt extra butter in a clean small saucepan on medium heat. Stir in breadcrumbs, parmesan and parsley. Season. Sprinkle over tuna mixture. Bake for 20 minutes or until golden.
STEP 5 For salad, combine rocket, pear and cucumber in a bowl. Whisk oil and balsamic glaze in a small jug and season. Pour over salad and gently toss to combine. Scatter with parmesan. Serve salad with pasta bakes.

> “CREATING A LATTICE FOR APPLE PIE ISN'T SCARY, IT JUST TAKES A LITTLE PATIENCE!”
>
> SARAH MURPHY, SENIOR FOOD EDITOR

COOK'S TIP

To make your own vegie mix, combine frozen peas and corn and a peeled, finely chopped carrot.

GRANDMA'S APPLE PIE

Recipe on page 26

SAVOURY MINCE AIR FRYER POTATOES

Preparation time 20 mins
Cooking time 50 mins
Serves 4

4 large sebago potatoes
2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 Tbsp sea-salt flakes
1 small brown onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 stalk celery, finely chopped
1 carrot, peeled, finely chopped
500g beef mince
¼ cup tomato paste
1 Tbsp plain flour
1 Tbsp worcestershire sauce
1 cup beef stock
Freshly ground black pepper, to season
Grated cheddar, sour cream and chopped chives, to serve

STEP 1 Preheat air fryer to 200°C for 10 minutes. Using a fork, prick potatoes all over. Rub 1 tablespoon oil over potatoes and sprinkle with salt. Cook in air fryer, turning halfway through cooking, for 40–50 minutes, until golden and tender.
STEP 2 Meanwhile, heat remaining oil in a large frying pan on medium heat. Add onion, garlic, celery and carrot. Cook, stirring, for 3–4 minutes.
STEP 3 Add mince and cook, breaking up with a wooden spoon, for 8–10 minutes or until cooked through.
STEP 4 Add tomato paste and stir to combine. Sprinkle over flour and stir. Add worcestershire and stock. Season with pepper. Bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to medium-low. Simmer, stirring occasionally, for 6–8 minutes or until sauce thickens slightly. Set aside.
STEP 5 Use a small knife to cut a cross into each potato and gently ease open. Spoon over mince. Serve topped with cheese, sour cream and chives.

CHEAT'S AIR FRYER CHICKEN KIEV

Preparation time 20 mins
Cooking time 45 mins
Serves 4

1½ cups panko breadcrumbs
1 tsp garlic powder
2 free-range eggs, lightly beaten
½ cup plain flour
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
4 small chicken breast fillets
Olive oil spray
100g unsalted butter, chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
¼ cup flat-leaf parsley, chopped
1 Tbsp finely chopped chives
Steamed broccolini and lemon wedges, to serve

MASH
800g potatoes, peeled, chopped
20g unsalted butter
¾ cup milk

STEP 1 Combine breadcrumbs and garlic powder in a medium bowl. Put egg in a medium bowl. Put flour on a plate and season.
STEP 2 Using a rolling pin or meat mallet, slightly flatten each piece of chicken. Dip in flour, shaking off excess. Dip in egg, then breadcrumb mixture, pressing firmly to coat. Transfer to a tray. Cover and refrigerate for 15 minutes (see Cook's Tip).
STEP 3 Preheat air fryer to 200°C for 5 minutes. Spray chicken with olive oil spray. Arrange half the chicken in a single layer in an air fryer basket. Cook, turning chicken halfway through, for 15–20 minutes or until golden and cooked. Transfer to a plate and keep warm. Repeat with remaining chicken.
STEP 4 Meanwhile, for mash, put potatoes in a medium saucepan, cover with cold water. Bring to the boil on high. Reduce heat to medium. Simmer, for 15 minutes or until potato is tender. Drain potatoes and return to pan off the heat. Using a potato masher, roughly mash potatoes. In a small saucepan, heat butter and milk until melted. Pour into mash and use a wooden spoon to stir until smooth. Set aside and keep warm.
STEP 5 Combine butter and garlic in a small saucepan on low. Cook, stirring, until butter melts and garlic is fragrant. Remove from heat. Stir in parsley and chives. Season.
STEP 6 Top mash with chicken and drizzle with garlic butter. Serve with broccolini and lemon wedges.

COOK'S TIP

Refrigerate chicken after crumbing – this sets the crumb mixture so it's less likely to fall off during cooking.

READY IN 30 MINUTES

GOLDEN SYRUP DUMPLINGS

Recipe on page 26

GRANDMA'S APPLE PIE

Preparation time 40 mins plus resting and cooling
Cooking time 1 hour 45 mins
Serves 6

- **9 large (about 1.5kg) Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, cut into 1.5cm wedges**
- **½ cup white sugar**
- **½ cup brown sugar**
- **2 tbsp plain flour**
- **1 Tbsp arrowroot, plus 1 Tbsp extra**
- **1 tsp ground cinnamon**
- **¼ tsp ground ginger**
- **1 tsp finely grated lemon zest**
- **1 tsp vanilla bean paste or extract**
- **1 free-range egg, lightly beaten**
- **2 Tbsp white sugar, extra**
- **Ice cream, to serve**

PASTRY

- **½ cup iced cold water**
- **1 Tbsp apple cider vinegar**
- **2½ cups plain flour, plus extra to dust**
- **1 tsp table salt**
- **1 tsp caster sugar**
- **225g cold unsalted butter, coarsely grated**

STEP 1 For pastry, combine water and vinegar in a small bowl and refrigerate. Put flour, salt and sugar in a medium bowl and toss with a fork to mix evenly. Add butter to flour mixture. Using fingers, dust butter in flour mixture.

STEP 2 Add water mixture to flour mixture, a few tablespoons at a time, and mix with a fork until a rough dough forms (add more cold water if needed). Use hands to quickly bring the dough together (don't overwork it).

STEP 3 Divide dough in half. Flatten into discs. Wrap separately in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour.

STEP 4 Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan-forced. In a large bowl, combine apple, sugars, flour, arrowroot, cinnamon, ginger, lemon zest and vanilla and toss to coat evenly.

STEP 5 Remove dough from fridge and set aside for 5 minutes to bring to room temperature. On a floured surface, roll one disc into a 30cm x 30cm square, 3mm thick. Cut pastry square into 12 strips, each 2.5cm wide. Roll out remaining pastry to a 30cm disc, 5mm thick. Refrigerate pastry strips. Lay pastry disc in the base of a 20cm round (base measurement) 4.5cm deep pie tin.

STEP 6 Sprinkle extra arrowroot over the pastry in the pie tin. Use a slotted spoon to spoon in the apple filling, discarding any excess juices at the bottom of the bowl. Use the pastry strips to make a lattice pattern on top of the filling. Press the edges to seal, trim any excess pastry, then crimp around the pie's edge with a fork. Brush top with egg and sprinkle with sugar.

STEP 7 Put pie on a baking tray. Bake for 45 minutes. Reduce oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced. Bake for a further 50 minutes to 1 hour, until the top is golden brown and juices are bubbling around the edge. Set aside at room temperature for at least 3 hours or overnight to cool. Serve with ice cream.

COOK'S TIP

Don't skip the cooling time – this allows the apple mixture to thicken and set.

> “YOU PROBABLY ALREADY HAVE ALL THE INGREDIENTS TO CREATE THESE INDULGENT GOLDEN SYRUP DUMPLINGS.”
>
> SARAH MURPHY, SENIOR FOOD EDITOR

GOLDEN SYRUP DUMPLINGS

Preparation time 15 mins
Cooking time 15 mins
Serves 4

- **½ cup packed brown sugar**
- **½ cup golden syrup**
- **20g unsalted butter, chopped**
- **1¼ cups water**
- **Thickened cream, to serve**

DUMPLINGS

- **40g unsalted butter, chilled, chopped**
- **1¼ cups self-raising flour**
- **Pinch table salt**
- **½ cup milk**
- **1 tsp vanilla extract**

STEP 1 Combine brown sugar, golden syrup, butter and water in a 2cm deep frying pan on low. Cook, stirring, until butter melts and the mixture combines in a caramel sauce. Remove from heat.

STEP 2 To make dumplings, combine butter, flour and salt in a medium bowl. Using fingertips, rub in butter until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. In a small bowl, combine milk and vanilla. Make a well in the centre of the flour mixture. Pour in milk mixture and stir until just combined.

STEP 3 Return the pan with the caramel sauce to heat. Increase heat to medium and bring the sauce to a simmer. Using a spoon, scoop tablespoon-sized portions of dumpling dough and gently drop them into the sauce, slightly apart (you'll need to allow enough space for the dumplings to double in size as they cook).

STEP 4 Cover with a lid and reduce heat to low. Cook for 10–12 minutes or until dumplings are fluffy and a skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean. Turn to coat in sauce.

STEP 5 Divide sauce and dumplings among bowls. Drizzle with cream to serve. ■

Food preparation Clare Maguire

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Cook air fryer PORK BELLY

Follow Sarah's simple steps to a crackling good time (and a spud bake to sigh for).

Photography TIM ROBERTS *Styling* LUCY BUSUTTIL *Recipe* SARAH MURPHY

Pat dry with towel.

Rest for 15 minutes.

Thickly slice pork.

AIR FRYER PORK BELLY WITH STUFFING POTATO BAKE

Preparation time 20 mins plus overnight refrigeration time
Cooking time 1 hour 20 mins
Serves 4

1.2kg piece boneless pork belly
1 tsp fine salt
2 Tbsp olive oil
1 Tbsp lemon juice
2 tsp dijon mustard
60g bag mixed salad leaves
40g packet baby rocket leaves
1 red apple, cored, thinly sliced
2 Tbsp chopped roasted macadamias
Apple sauce, to serve

STUFFING POTATO BAKE

40g butter, plus extra to grease
1 brown onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 Tbsp chopped sage, plus extra leaves to serve
300ml thickened cream
⅓ cup milk
½ cup finely grated parmesan
1 Tbsp thyme leaves
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
1kg bag white washed potatoes, cut into 5mm thick slices

STEP 1 The day before cooking, place pork belly on a tray, skin-side up and uncovered, in the fridge overnight (this helps dry the skin for a good crackling).
STEP 2 For the potato bake, preheat oven to 160°C/140°C fan-forced. Melt butter in a frying pan on medium heat. Cook onion for 4–5 minutes or until tender. Add garlic and chopped sage. Cook 2–3 minutes, until fragrant. Cool. Grease a 6-cup baking dish. Combine cream, milk, parmesan, thyme and onion mixture in a large bowl. Season. Add potato. Toss to coat. Arrange potato slices in small stacks on their sides in dish. Pour over any remaining cream mixture. Place dish on an oven tray. Cover with foil. Bake for 45 minutes. Uncover. Bake for a further 25 minutes, until potato is tender. Top with extra sage leaves for the last 5 minutes to crisp.
STEP 3 Meanwhile, preheat air fryer to 200°C. Using a small sharp knife, score pork rind at 1cm intervals and pat dry with paper towel. Rub with salt. Carefully place in air fryer basket. Cook for 30 minutes or until rind is golden and crackled. Reduce air fryer to 160°C. Cook for a further 30 minutes, until pork is cooked through and has an internal temperature of 70°–75°C on a meat thermometer. Rest for 15 minutes on a rack. Scatter with sea-salt flakes. Thickly slice pork through the score lines.
STEP 4 In a small bowl, whisk oil, juice and mustard. Toss with salad leaves, rocket, apple and macadamias in a bowl.
STEP 5 Serve with pork, salad and apple sauce. ■

Food preparation Clare Maguire; step photography © Are Media www.contentshop.com.au

AIR FRYER PORK BELLY WITH STUFFING POTATO BAKE

Recipe opposite

Turn up the HEAT

Keep the winter blues away by putting in radiant red and hot pink plants that take the edge off the chill.

Words JENNY DILLON

You're in the depths of winter, you only want to stay indoors, snuggled under a blanket in front of a heater. All the while your garden is calling you: "Help! Winter weeds are taking over." You may be more enticed to go out into the cold if you put in plants that produce brilliant red and hot pink flowers. These blooms visually emanate warmth, energy and excitement. Red is a 'hot' colour, while hot pink, because its red intensity is diluted, is 'warm'. Both colours invoke passion, so make your blood boil this winter – in the best way possible!

Cyclamen

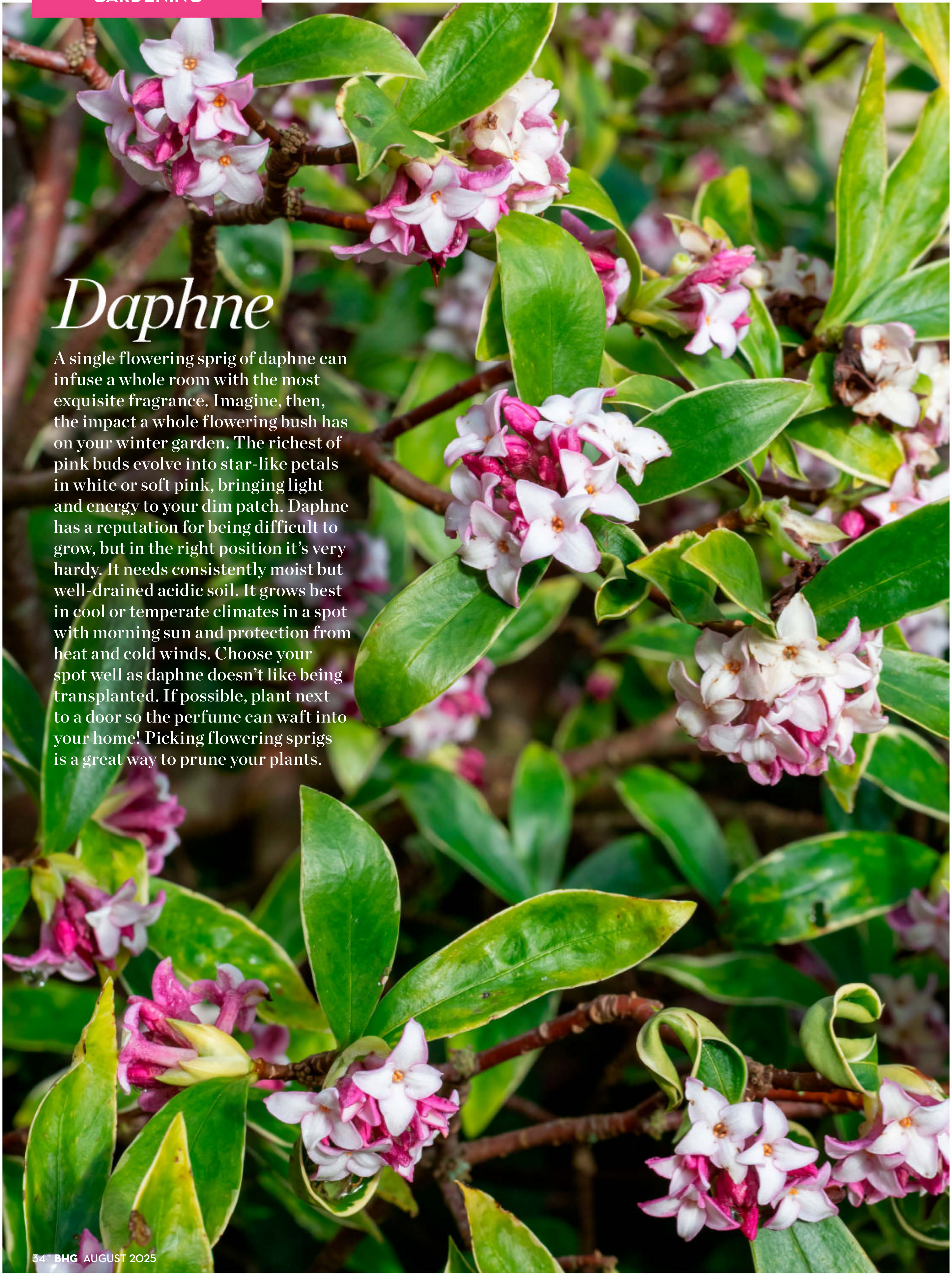
You don't get butterflies in winter – unless you plant cyclamens. Rising above thick, marbled leaves, these fragrant blooms flutter in glowing reds, hot pinks and sultry purples. Cyclamens grow in cool, temperate and elevated regions, where they cope with light frosts and shade. They love to be under deciduous trees for dappled shade in summer and full sun in winter. But don't crowd them – they hate humidity, which can cause mould and rot. If growing indoors in a pot, don't let them sit in too much water. Wait until they're almost dry, or starting to wilt, then stand the pot in water until the soil is soaked. Every couple of weeks, feed with a liquid fertiliser high in potassium to promote flowers.

Hellebore

These coy, nodding flowers consist of a cluster of speckled, freckled or streaked sepals rather than petals. (The actual petals are short tubular ‘nectaries’ that sit below the stamens.) Hellebores pop up in late winter, rejoicing in chilly temperatures and crisp frosts. A romantic notion is to plant them under a deciduous tree to get winter sun and summer shade. They’re shallow rooted so thrive under nutrient-greedy trees. Hellebores do best in cool or temperate regions in moist, enriched soil. They’re drought tolerant once established and many self-seed. Venture out and pick some to float in a water bowl indoors!

Flowering quince

These sweet flowers emerging on bare branches in late winter resemble semi-double roses. Colours range from scarlet to pink to orange-red. They stud the bare, thorny branches for weeks, letting your spring bulbs know it's time to get along! Despite the fragile look of the blooms, flowering quinces are tough, and heat and drought tolerant once established. They also cope with a wide variety of conditions and soils, including clay. They make excellent cuttings for a floral arrangement.

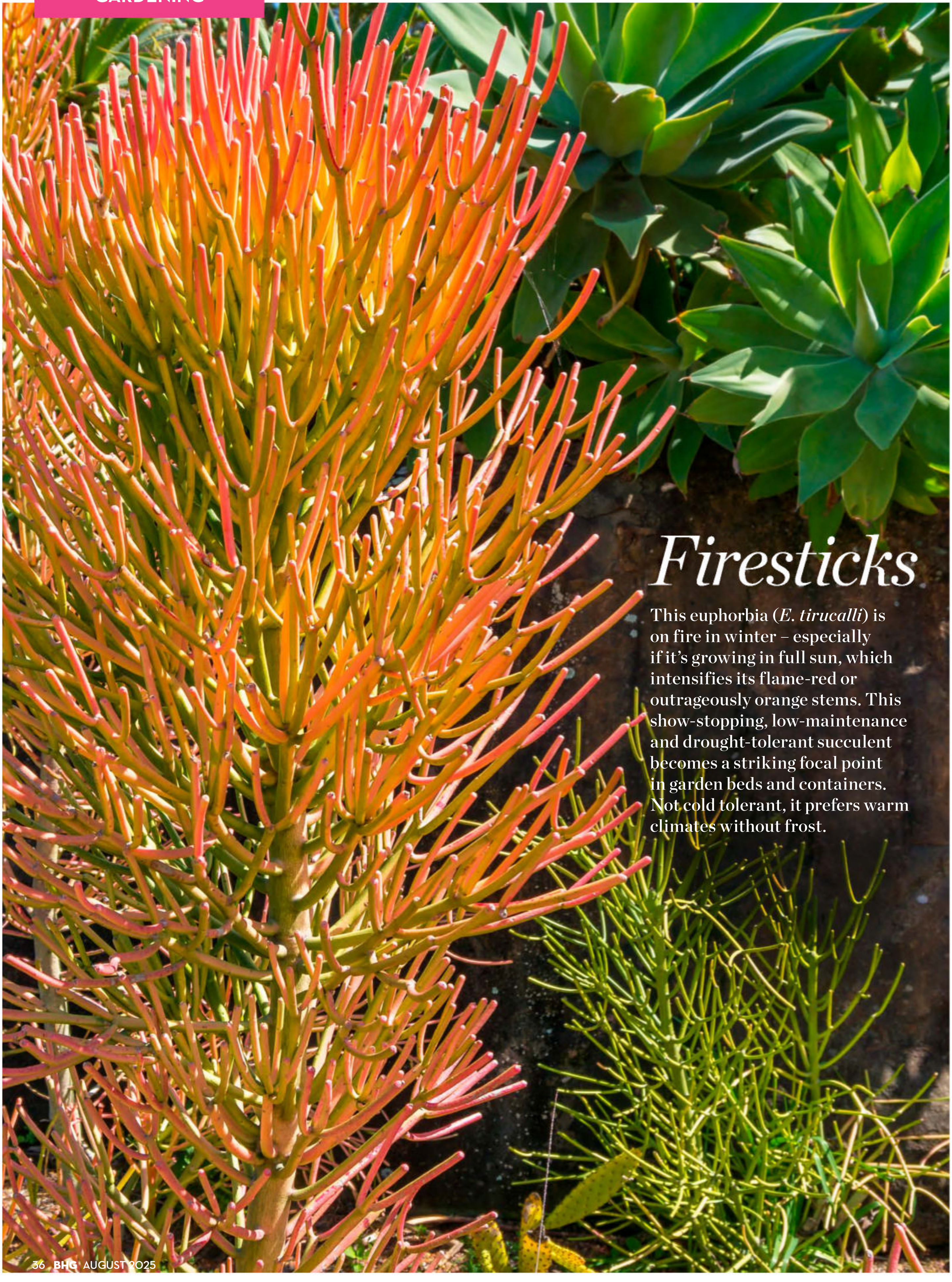


Daphne

A single flowering sprig of daphne can infuse a whole room with the most exquisite fragrance. Imagine, then, the impact a whole flowering bush has on your winter garden. The richest of pink buds evolve into star-like petals in white or soft pink, bringing light and energy to your dim patch. Daphne has a reputation for being difficult to grow, but in the right position it's very hardy. It needs consistently moist but well-drained acidic soil. It grows best in cool or temperate climates in a spot with morning sun and protection from heat and cold winds. Choose your spot well as daphne doesn't like being transplanted. If possible, plant next to a door so the perfume can waft into your home! Picking flowering sprigs is a great way to prune your plants.

Magnolia

With flowers like flying saucers ready to take off, without any foliage to ground them, the saucer or tulip magnolia (*M. soulangeana*) really does look out of this world. The festoon of flowers puts on a vibrant and profuse display in winter before the leaves appear. Petals are soft or shocking pink on the outside and palest pink or white on the inside, with a big red bundle of stamens at their centre. Some of those fragrant flowers can spread to 20–25cm once unfurled. Growing to about 7 metres, the tree is alluring and elegant. It does best in cool to temperate zones, in a sunny spot protected from wind and heavy frosts, in moist, well-drained soil.

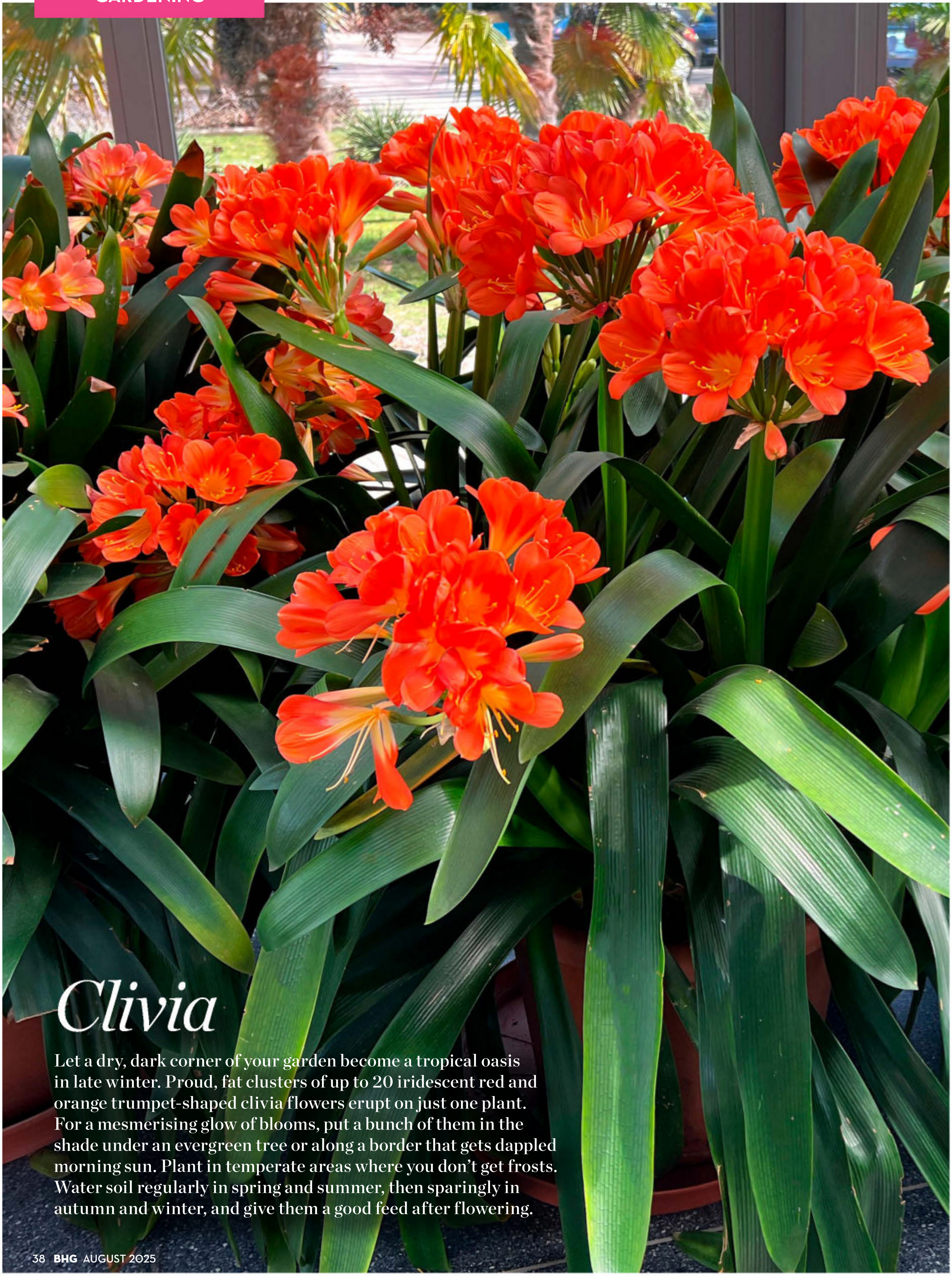


Firesticks

This euphorbia (*E. tirucalli*) is on fire in winter – especially if it's growing in full sun, which intensifies its flame-red or outrageously orange stems. This show-stopping, low-maintenance and drought-tolerant succulent becomes a striking focal point in garden beds and containers. Not cold tolerant, it prefers warm climates without frost.

Iceland poppies

Delicate, papery petals in vibrant colours unfurl from their buds like a crushed silk dress. These poppies give elegance and charm to a sunny spot in a late winter garden. They're mostly short-lived perennials in cool regions. In temperate zones, treat these poppies as annuals. Just one plant can produce numerous flowers, growing to an impressive 60cm. If you want more of these delights, deadhead flowers when they begin to fade – allowing the beautiful barrel-shaped seed pods to form slows the production of new flowers. Plant or sow seeds in rich, well-drained soil. Keep moist and feed every couple of weeks with liquid fertiliser when in flower.



Clivia

Let a dry, dark corner of your garden become a tropical oasis in late winter. Proud, fat clusters of up to 20 iridescent red and orange trumpet-shaped clivia flowers erupt on just one plant. For a mesmerising glow of blooms, put a bunch of them in the shade under an evergreen tree or along a border that gets dappled morning sun. Plant in temperate areas where you don't get frosts. Water soil regularly in spring and summer, then sparingly in autumn and winter, and give them a good feed after flowering.

Photography Adobe Stock

Dogwood

This is a small tree for all seasons in cool and temperate regions. It has showy white, cream, pink or red flowers in spring, gentle cascades of lush, green foliage in summer and vibrant red or deep burgundy leaves and red berries in autumn. But when the leaves and berries fall, there's a dramatic winter transformation. That's when the thicket of stems turn into glorious sprays of red, orange or gold that light up your garden. It's a shock of colour that brings life to a winter landscape. ■

Connect through caring

Your time and talents are powerful – put them to work making someone's day a little brighter.

Words TAHNI MESANN

Let's lean into a different kind of warm and fuzzy feeling this winter. One that goes beyond snuggly blankets, bed socks and reading a good book by the heater. I'm talking about the kind of heartwarming feeling you get when you've done something to make someone else's day a little better.

If you're unsure what you can offer someone in need, look to your passions for inspiration. Take your penchant for cooking, gardening, knitting, cleaning (I'm told people who love to clean do, in fact, exist) or even for a good chinwag, and turn it into your superpower! One that can help someone who's going through a rough patch, who feels lonely, who's just had a baby, or who would just appreciate knowing you're thinking of them. Feeling warm and fuzzy yet? Here's how to channel your gifts and skills into action.

MAKE DOUBLE

Receiving a home-cooked meal made by someone else feels so special. Next time you're whipping up a storm in the kitchen, consider doubling the batch and give the extra portions to someone who might appreciate it. Offer a batch of delicious chicken soup to that neighbour who's struck down by the flu. Or, for that friend caring for elderly parents, a hearty lasagne might feel like a big warm hug in a dish.

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code for our recipe for soul-healing chicken soup with winter vegetables.

Offer chores outdoors

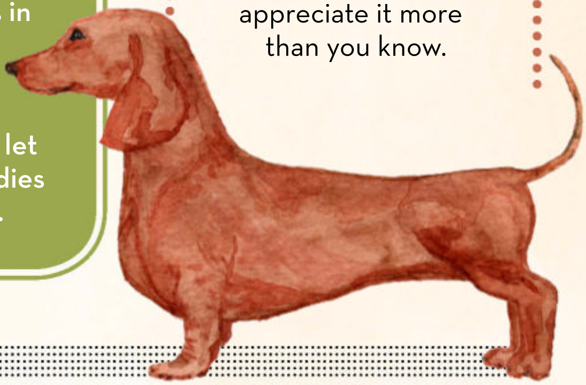
Gardening is often the first task to slide down the list of priorities when life throws a curveball. If someone you know is recovering from a stint in hospital or unable to tend to their garden themselves, you can lend a hand by offering to tidy their garden (with their permission, of course!). Weeding, mowing the lawn, watering plants and taking out the bins can make a huge difference. Get the kids or grandkids involved – it's never too early to learn about the importance of community and caring for others.

Share *botanical* abundance

What's growing in your garden? Whether there are flowers in bloom or you've somehow grown more zucchinis than you know what to do with, chances are someone in your circle would be glad to receive them. Pop surplus vegies in a basket and drop them on a friend's doorstep. Or place a crate by your front fence with a sign to let neighbours know the goodies are free for the taking.

Be a stand-in PET PARENT

Finding a trustworthy pet-sitter isn't always easy. If you love animals or consider yourself a proud pet parent, you could put up your hand to be this reliable someone in your community. You can either go all in by volunteering to pet-sit for an extended period, or pop by daily to walk a friend's dog, keep the pet company and top up food and water. If the owners are out of town, be sure to send them snaps regularly – they'll appreciate it more than you know.



THINGS TO REMEMBER

It won't always be convenient to go out of your way to help someone. When motivation is lacking, think back to a time when someone lent you a helping hand and how much that gesture meant to you. This might help give you the boost you need to pass on that goodness.

Craft for charity

Your ability to knit, crochet or sew can help make the world a better place! There are plenty of charities that accept donations of knitted or crocheted squares, wraps, hats, scarves and more that will be used and distributed to those in need. The ABC Rug Up Tassie winter knitting appeal is a wonderful example, taking knitted square donations, organising teams of knitters to join them and distributing blankets to those in need through winter via Salvos Stores. You can also support Wrap with Love Inc. by joining a knitting group or taking knitted donations to a Spotlight store or community drop-off point.

Have a yarn

We're more connected than ever, thanks to social media, but there's nothing quite like an in-person catch up. You never know what someone else might be going through and simply showing up to listen is one of the most powerful forms of support you can offer. Drop in on a friend with a batch of freshly baked scones or yummy store-bought biscuits and see where the conversation takes you. Make sure you take the time to really listen, then keep the connection going by putting time in the calendar for a future catch-up – it'll give them and you something to look forward to! If you can't meet in person, pick up the phone or write a letter – they'll be glad to hear from you.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

The perfect opportunity to help someone won't just fall into your lap. Being helpful requires a combination of observation, intent and, most importantly, meaningful action.

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code for more ways to craft for charity.

See a need, fill a need

New parents are often sleep-deprived and operating in survival mode. When visiting them and their bundle of joy, don't wait for an invitation to help where needed. Spot a load of washing in the dryer? Fold it and put it away. Dishes in the sink? Stack the dishwasher and run it. If you have time, offer to make a trip to the supermarket or pharmacy for supplies. When offering to help in situations like these, instead of asking "How can I help?" try "I have a spare 10 minutes, would you prefer me to heat up some lunch or to do a quick tidy-up?". It will be easier for them to accept when given two options to choose from.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

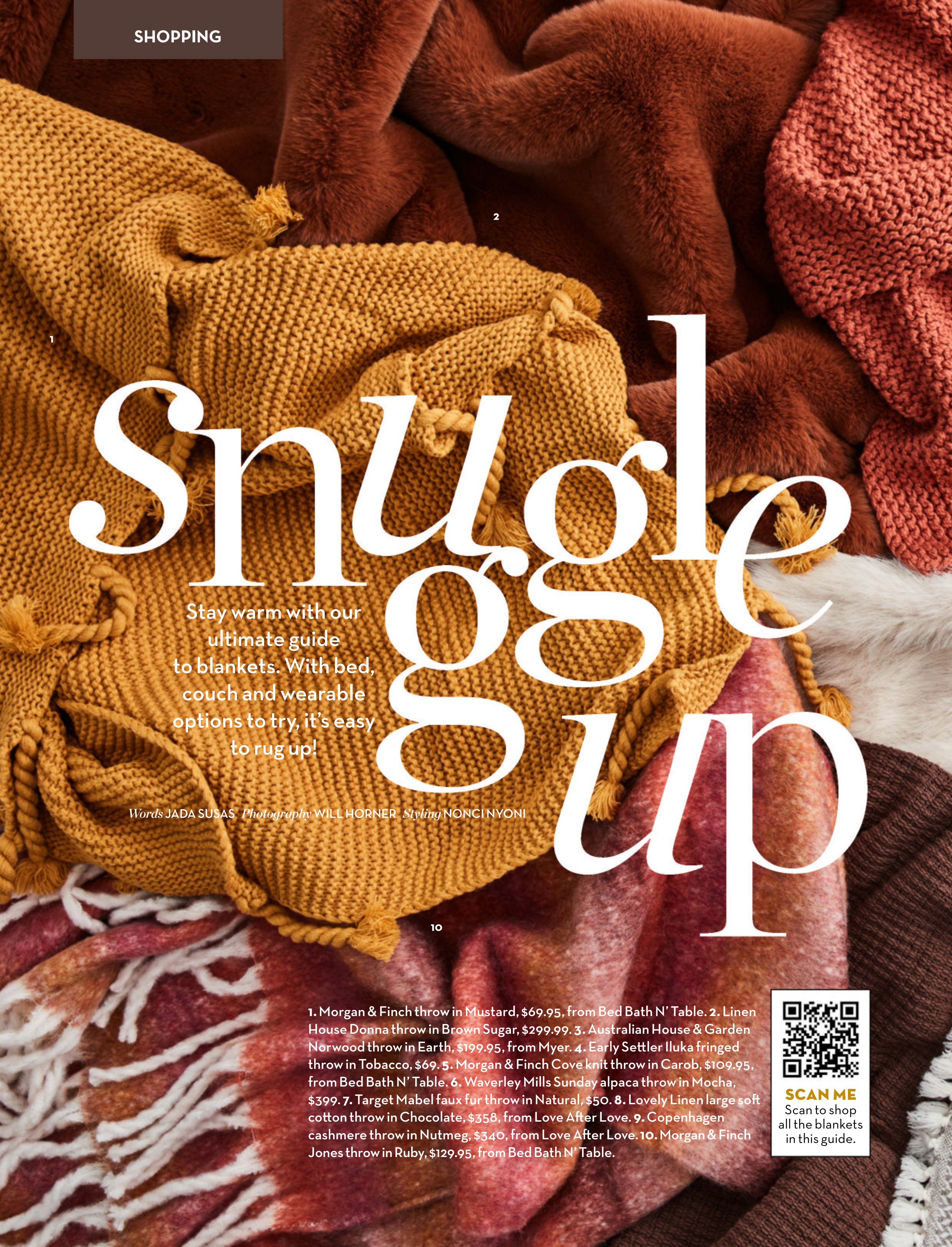
Offer to help in a way that will be appreciated. We're all individuals – what one friend may love, another may not find so helpful. Be mindful of individual needs and preferences, such as dietary requirements when batch cooking or allergies to certain pollens if you're gifting garden pickings. ■

Illustrations Adobe Stock

Snuggle up

Stay warm with our ultimate guide to blankets. With bed, couch and wearable options to try, it's easy to rug up!

Words JADA SUSAS *Photography* WILL HORNER *Styling* NONCI NYONI



1. Morgan & Finch throw in Mustard, $69.95, from Bed Bath N' Table. **2.** Linen House Donna throw in Brown Sugar, $299.99. **3.** Australian House & Garden Norwood throw in Earth, $199.95, from Myer. **4.** Early Settler Iluka fringed throw in Tobacco, $69. **5.** Morgan & Finch Cove knit throw in Carob, $109.95, from Bed Bath N' Table. **6.** Waverley Mills Sunday alpaca throw in Mocha, $399. **7.** Target Mabel faux fur throw in Natural, $50. **8.** Lovely Linen large soft cotton throw in Chocolate, $358, from Love After Love. **9.** Copenhagen cashmere throw in Nutmeg, $340, from Love After Love. **10.** Morgan & Finch Jones throw in Ruby, $129.95, from Bed Bath N' Table.

SCAN ME
Scan to shop all the blankets in this guide.

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A heated under-blanket is only as good as its foundation. Check out Harvey Norman for a wide range of mattresses from trusted brands.

heated blankets

A heated blanket is a modern essential for anyone trying to save on their energy bills and stay warm while doing it! Heated blankets are cost-effective as instead of heating a whole room, you're heating a small area. According to Energy Australia, using a heated blanket costs about four cents per hour on average, far less than a space heater costs to run.

From under-blankets for your bed to portable heated throws, there's a huge range of options priced from $35 through to more than $400. If you think a heated blanket is for you, think about how you'll use it – you'll want one with the right features.

SOME FEATURES WE LOVE:

- A built-in timer lets you choose when the blanket will turn off. This means you'll be able to drift off to sleep without having to worry about overheating.
- Multiple heat settings let you tailor the blanket to your needs.
- Look out for machine washability as well – heated blankets are filled with wires, so it's important to check how easy they are to clean.
- Safety features such as overheat protection and detachable cables are also ideal. Lying on bulky cables or getting too hot at night can ruin your cosy haven.

1. Kmart fitted electric blanket in white, queen bed, $55.
2. L'Avenue Luxury Neves heated throw in Mustard, $169, from Harvey Norman.
3. L'Avenue Alpine heated throw in Sage, $169, Harvey Norman.
4. Stoov Big Hug XL cordless heated blanket, $254.
5. Dreamaker check plush electric heated throw blanket in Chai/Cream, $109.95, Myer.
6. Heritage check heated throw in Sage, $119.95, from Myer.

throw rugs

If you're after something simpler and more versatile for everyday use, a classic throw rug might be just right. Typically light in fabric and weight, and often placed at the end of a bed or sofa, throw rugs are large enough to cover you on the couch. They're also an easy and inexpensive way to add colour and warmth.

YOUR MATERIAL CHOICES:

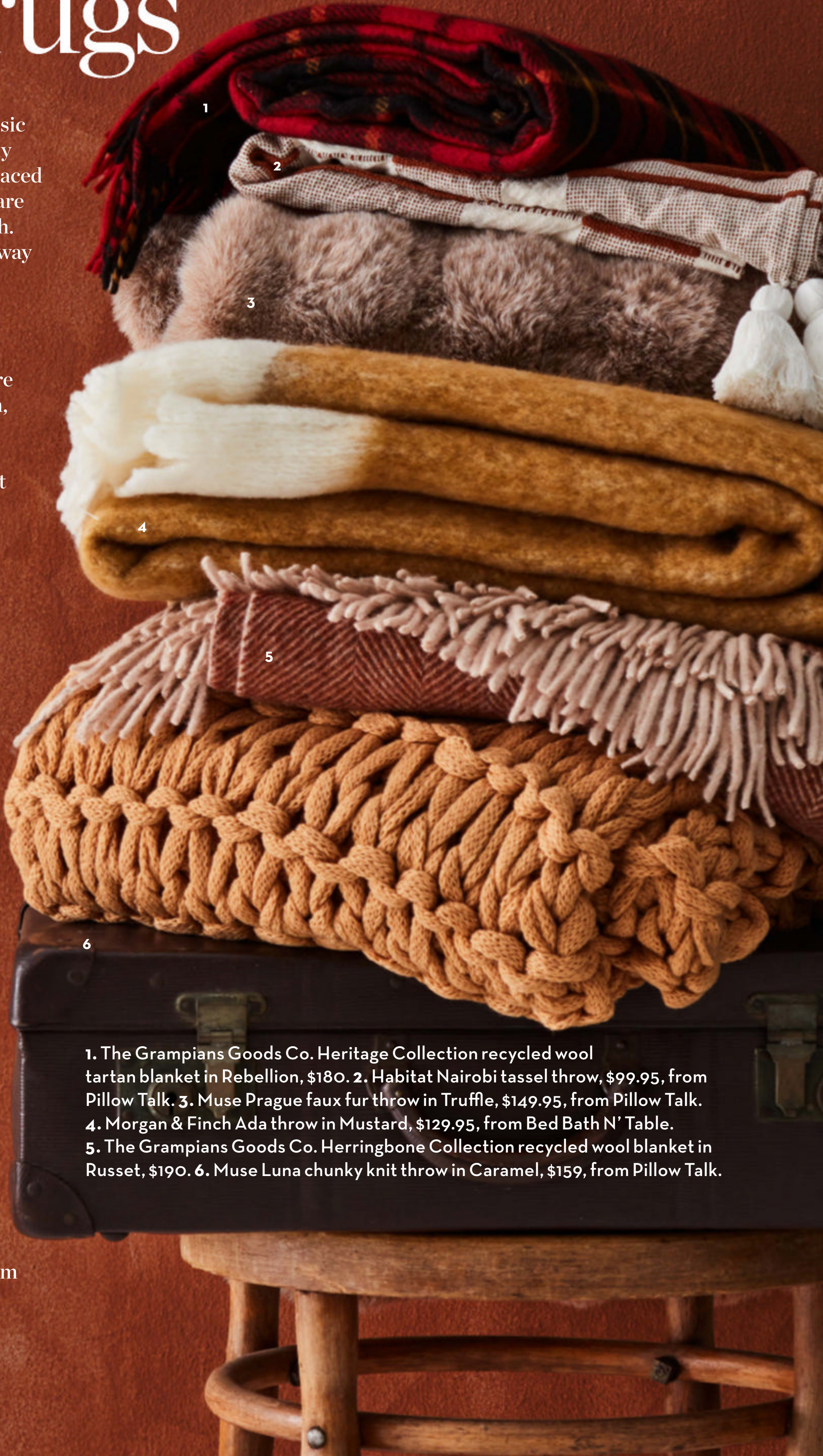
COTTON – A natural, breathable fibre that offers a soft feel and light warmth, ensuring you don't overheat. For an eco-friendly option, look for throws made of organic cotton grown without pesticides and chemical treatments, it's gentler on the skin and the planet. Look for the GOTS (Global Organic Textile Standard) certification.

WOOL – Naturally insulating and moisture-wicking, wool throws offer serious warmth for chillier weather. They're ideal for keeping the heat in and dampness and bacteria out. If you associate wool with itchiness, opt for a finer blend that feels softer on the skin, such as merino or lambswool. A textured option such as mohair can add a sumptuous element to your living room aesthetic.

FLEECE – A budget-friendly, super cuddly option. Made from synthetic polyester, fleece is easy to wash and quick to dry.

BAMBOO – Soft and breathable, bamboo is naturally antibacterial – great for households with allergies!

FAUX FUR – With a plush, velvety-soft texture that mimics real fur, this fabric adds a luxury feel to your sofa or bed. It's often made from acrylic, modacrylic and/or polyester.



1. The Grampians Goods Co. Heritage Collection recycled wool tartan blanket in Rebellion, $180. **2.** Habitat Nairobi tassel throw, $99.95, from Pillow Talk. **3.** Muse Prague faux fur throw in Truffle, $149.95, from Pillow Talk. **4.** Morgan & Finch Ada throw in Mustard, $129.95, from Bed Bath N' Table. **5.** The Grampians Goods Co. Herringbone Collection recycled wool blanket in Russet, $190. **6.** Muse Luna chunky knit throw in Caramel, $159, from Pillow Talk.

weighted blankets

Weighted blankets are a wellness staple. Either filled with plastic pellets, glass microbeads or made from a heavy woven knit, the weighted blanket is designed to mimic the experience of being held or hugged. This sensation can ease tension and reduce stress, helping those with anxiety and sleep disorders sleep through the night.

The outer fabric of a weighted blanket is often a softer material such as cotton and fleece. Just like with throw rugs, it can be placed anywhere around the house, so long as you're willing to do some heavy lifting.

That said, don't be tempted to buy a weighted blanket that's too heavy for you. The general rule is the weight of the blanket should be 5 to 12 per cent of your body weight.

1. The Oodie weighted blanket in blue, 4.5kg, $149. **2.** Aldrin Home Elisha weighted blanket, $89.99 for 9kg, from Temple & Webster. **3.** Oakleigh Home knitted weighted blanket, 6kg, $149.99, from Temple & Webster. **4.** Therapy Blanket bamboo weighted blanket in Calming Blue, 11kg (queen), $280. **5.** Kmart adult weighted blanket in grey, $47. **6.** Neptune Blanket knitted weighted blanket in dark grey, 150cm x 200cm, $399. **7.** Oakleigh Home Veda double weighted blanket, 9kg, $99.99, from Temple & Webster.

quilts & doonas

A doona, duvet or quilt is an insulated insert that goes inside a quilt cover, designed to trap heat. Choosing the perfect quilt can make a huge difference to your sleep as they're not all created equal.

CONSIDER YOUR FILLING:

FEATHER AND DOWN – Usually from ducks or geese, feathers add bulk to the quilt and down provides softness and warmth. There are summer and winter weights, depending on the ratio of feather and down.

WOOL – Breathable and naturally insulating, wool is ideal for year-round comfort. It's also a little heavier than feather and down.

COTTON – A lightweight and breathable option, cotton is a smart choice for warmer climates or hot sleepers.

BAMBOO – Naturally hypoallergenic, moisture-wicking bamboo is an eco-friendly option.

POLYESTER – This synthetic fibre is a great option for lean budgets and those with allergies.

MICROFIBRE – Soft, lightweight and warm, with a plush feel that's similar to down.

The weight of a quilt, listed as a GSM number (grams per square metre), is also important. The higher the GSM, the warmer the quilt. If you tend to overheat in the night, opt for a lower GSM. And if you feel the cold, a higher GSM will be a lifesaver.

1. MiniJumbuk Everyday Australian wool quilt, from $399.99, from Myer. **2.** Anko All Seasons Wool Quilt (medium warmth), from $52, from Target. **3.** IKEA Småsporre extra-warm duvet, from $29. **4.** Anko High Warmth Quilt, from $45, from Target.

wearable blankets

Afraid to leave the cosy comfort of the couch to make a cuppa? Then you might be in the market for a wearable blanket. Born from the concept of 'blankets with sleeves', wearable blanket brands such as Snuggie and Oodie have taken the internet and homes by storm.

The Snuggie is a blanket with sleeves made from an ultra-soft fleece material. The oversized sleeves give you the freedom to eat, read and remote work while never removing your arms from the blanket. The thicker cousin of the Snuggie is the Oodie; an oversized blanket hoodie available in a huge range of patterns, from pandas to Pokémon. The inner lining is made of polyester sherpa fleece and the outer of flannel fleece.

The Oodie can be more comfortably worn on the go as it sits on your shoulders and doesn't drag on the floor. Because it's so warm, an Oodie is quite bulky! This means it also takes a little longer to dry.

If you're willing to sacrifice elegance for some unbeatable cosiness, then it's time to hop on the wearable blanket train.

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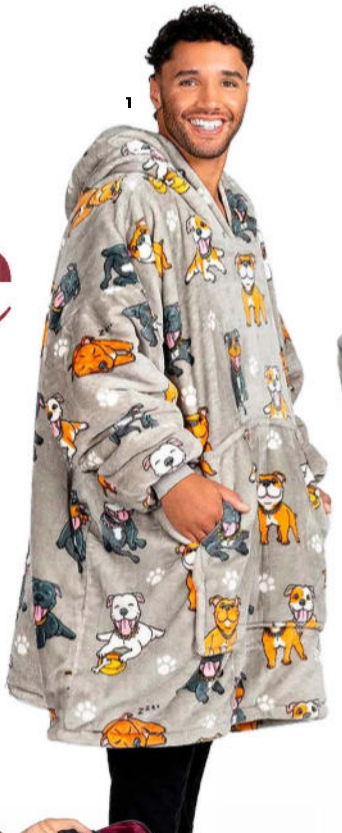

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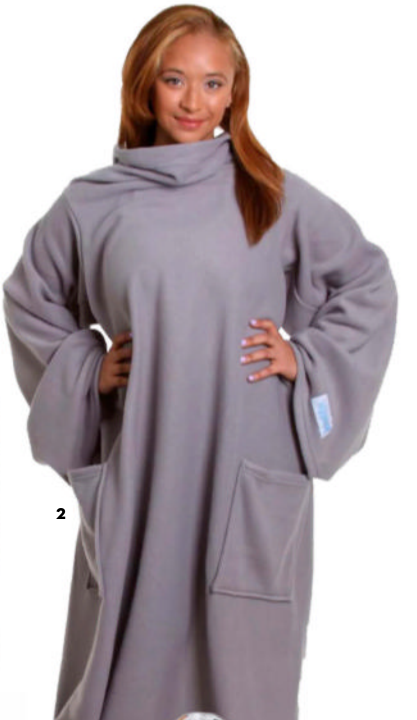

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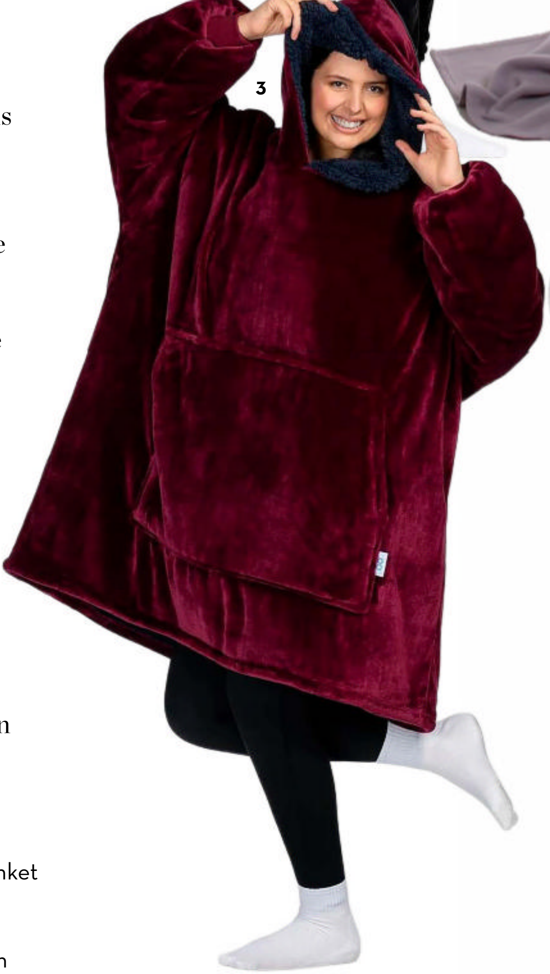

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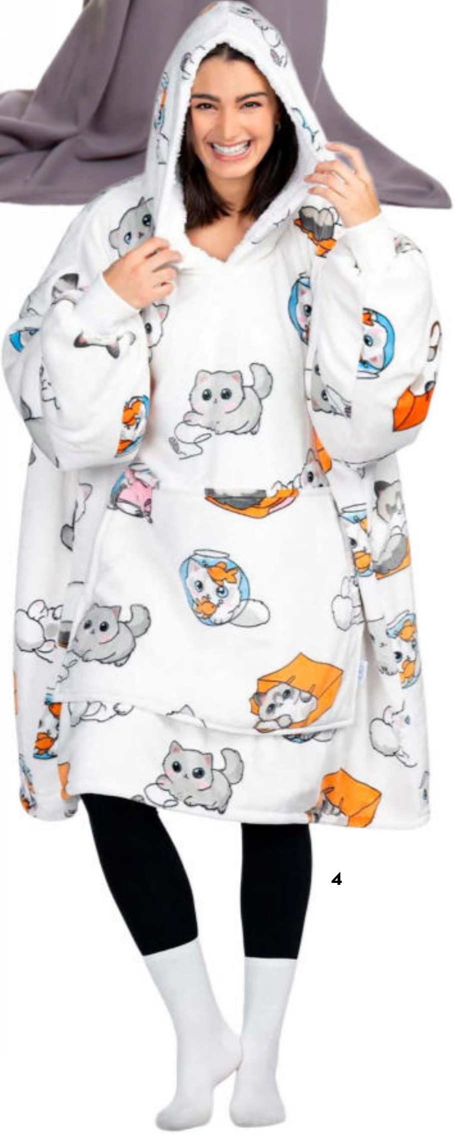


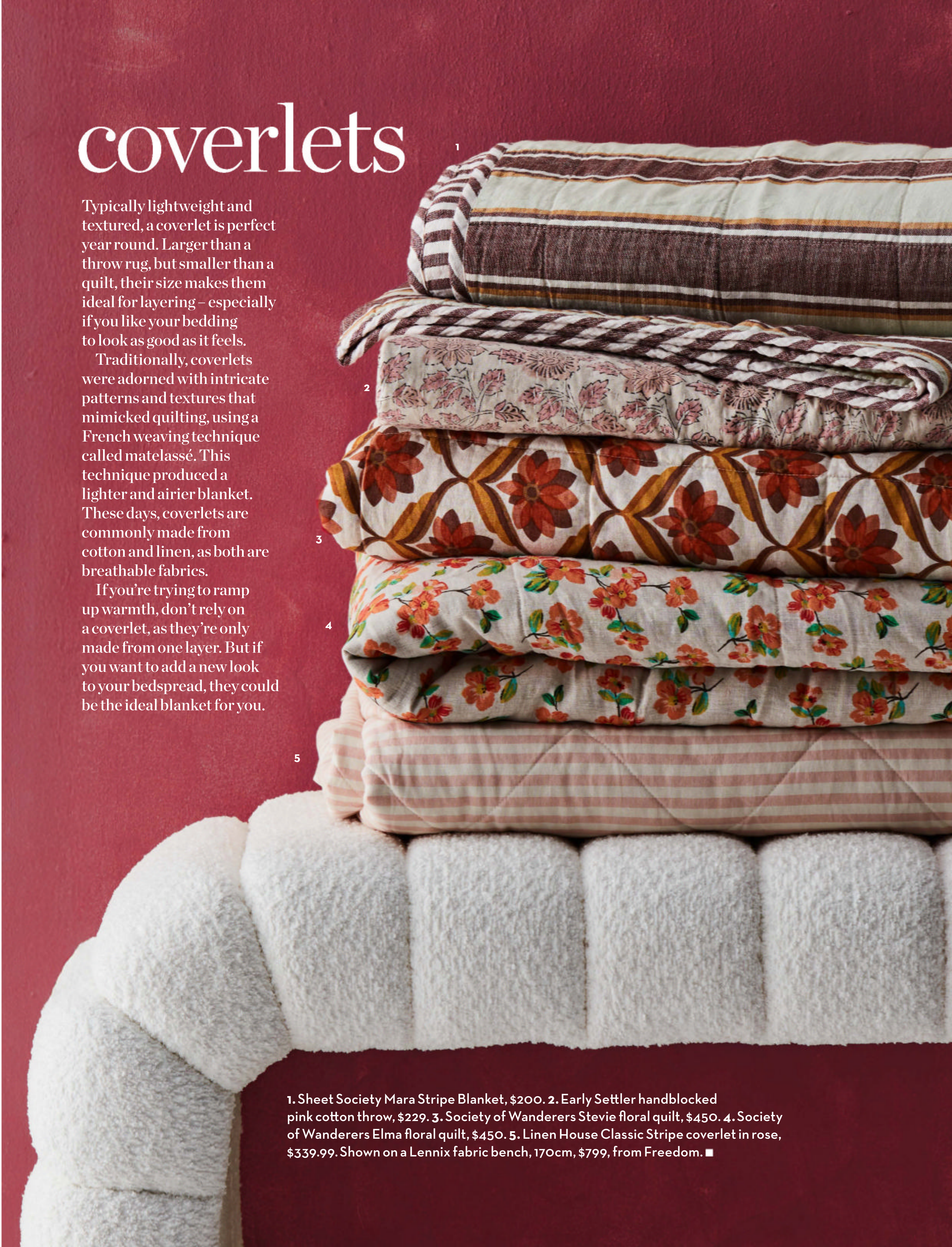
1. Oodie Original in Staffy, $89, from The Oodie. **2.** Snuggie wearable blanket in light grey, $70.48, from Amazon. **3.** Oodie Original in burgundy, $89, from The Oodie. **4.** Oodie Original in Grey Cat, $89, from The Oodie.

coverlets

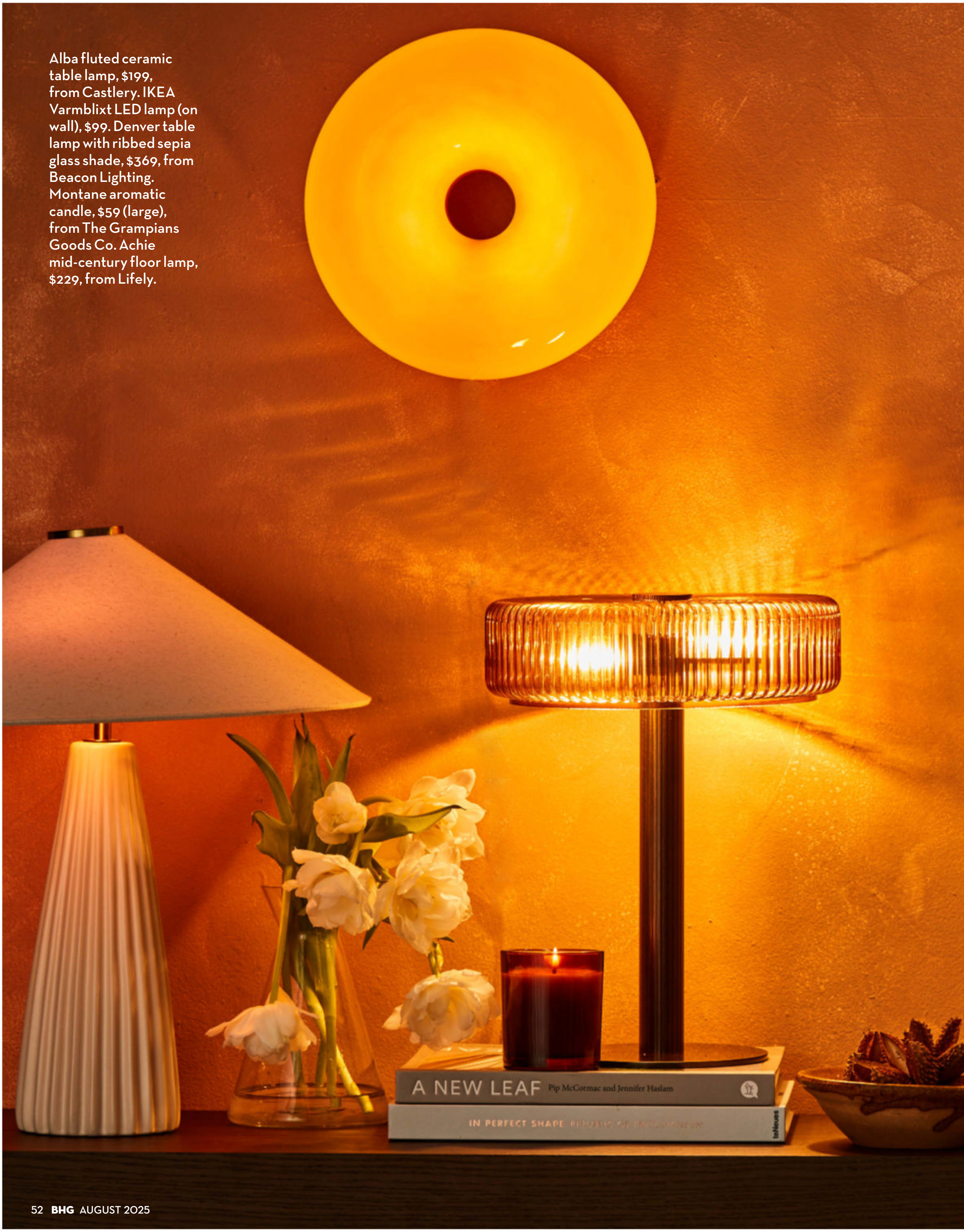
Typically lightweight and textured, a coverlet is perfect year round. Larger than a throw rug, but smaller than a quilt, their size makes them ideal for layering – especially if you like your bedding to look as good as it feels.

Traditionally, coverlets were adorned with intricate patterns and textures that mimicked quilting, using a French weaving technique called matelassé. This technique produced a lighter and airier blanket. These days, coverlets are commonly made from cotton and linen, as both are breathable fabrics.

If you're trying to ramp up warmth, don't rely on a coverlet, as they're only made from one layer. But if you want to add a new look to your bedspread, they could be the ideal blanket for you.



1. Sheet Society Mara Stripe Blanket, $200. **2.** Early Settler handblocked pink cotton throw, $229. **3.** Society of Wanderers Stevie floral quilt, $450. **4.** Society of Wanderers Elma floral quilt, $450. **5.** Linen House Classic Stripe coverlet in rose, $339.99. Shown on a Lennix fabric bench, 170cm, $799, from Freedom. ■


A NEW LEAF Pip McCormac and Jennifer Haslam
IN PERFECT SHAPE
teNeues

Alba fluted ceramic table lamp, $199, from Castlery. IKEA Varmblixt LED lamp (on wall), $99. Denver table lamp with ribbed sepia glass shade, $369, from Beacon Lighting. Montane aromatic candle, $59 (large), from The Grampians Goods Co. Achie mid-century floor lamp, $229, from Lifely.

Setting the mood

Create cosy and ambient spaces with lamps and warm lighting.

Words LYNNE TESTONI *Photography* WILL HORNER *Styling* NONCI NYONI

There's nothing quite like stepping into a room that instantly makes you want to curl up and unwind. The secret? It's all about the lighting. Our biggest tip for creating an ambient and cosy atmosphere is simple: Turn off the big light!

Overhead lighting can feel harsh and intense, and as Mandi Kontos from Beacon Lighting explains, indirect lighting is far cosier. "You can sit in a room and not feel like you're being essentially assaulted by the light," she says. "When you have the big light on it does make it quite intense. Especially at home, I tend to use just lamps."

Table lamps, floor lamps, wall sconces and candles create gentle pools of light and pockets of comfort. Most light globes come with warm or cool options, so choose warm bulbs for that inviting glow.

Gabby Thomas, a design lead at Freedom, says she prefers using warm lighting at home, "particularly in the living room and bedroom because of the cosy and restful atmosphere they promote."

Layering your lighting options with warm-toned sources can soften the mood, add depth and transform any space into a welcoming sanctuary you'll love to relax in.

table

Having desk or table lamps positioned about a room lets you layer decorative elements and gives you versatile lighting options, too. You can turn them all on or use just one to create an ambient atmosphere.

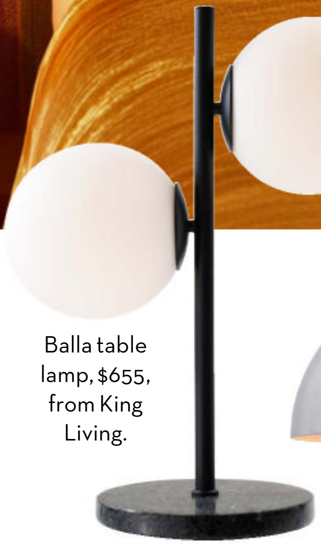
Lamps are easy to update by replacing either the shade or base and are perfect for renters because they aren't permanent. Keep table lamps consistent in style if you're after a cohesive look and coordinate them with any floor lamps.

Mandi Kontos suggests choosing softer coloured shades for table lamps, rather than a crisp white. She recommends natural colours, such as soft beige or even charcoal, which can help diffuse the light and make it even softer.

TOP TIP Table lamps don't need to be confined to bedrooms or living spaces. A recent trend is having a small, stylish option in your cooking space. "I'm seeing a lot of people putting a lamp on their kitchen bench," Mandi says. "It just adds a little bit of bling without having a pendant over the island. So it's a nice soft touch that gives you a lot of light, but still provides some ambience."

Lucci Catalina table lamp, $249, from Beacon Lighting.

Nadia ceramic table lamp, 45cm, $149, from Castlery.

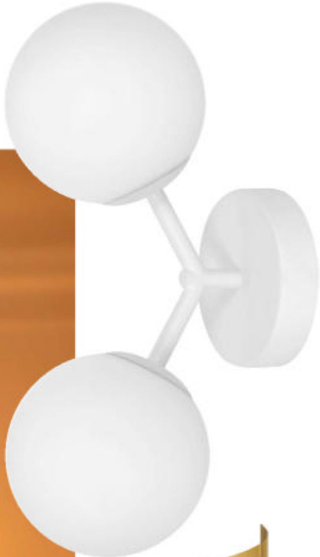


Balla table lamp, $655, from King Living.

Lucci Atila table lamp in Sage, $129 for two, from Beacon Lighting.

Dome table lamp in chrome, $329, from Freedom.

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code to shop these gorgeous table lamp options.



Lucci Orion wall bracket in Chalk, $249, from Beacon Lighting.

Verve Design Alcor wall light, $38, from Bunnings.

Rexington Home Lombard wall light, $545, from Temple & Webster.

sconce

“If space is tight, wall sconces are a great alternative to table lamps and can add symmetry to a space,” says Gabby Thomas from Freedom. “Consider options that can be tilted or pivoted to direct the light source away from your line of sight. Also consider dimmable options across table lamps and wall sconces for a mix of mood and function at different times of the day.”

An advantage of choosing a wall sconce is you can opt for a decorative style that will add character to a room without cluttering a table.

“More ornamented and decorative styles of wall sconces are definitely having a moment in interiors currently and work as a great design statement,” Gabby says. “They can also be used in entryways and hallways as an alternative to bright overhead lighting and can accent the space from a decorative standpoint.”

Alternatively, you can choose a soft shape such as a circle which is backlit to allow discreet lighting without overwhelming a space. Bathrooms often look great with sconces framing a mirror.

Lighting Republic Orb ledge wall light, $410 (small), from RJ Living.

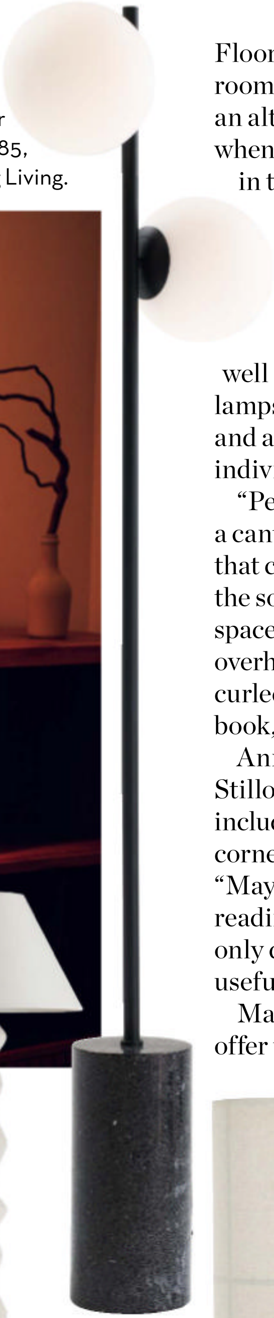
Lucci Amore pleated wall sconce in Natural Linen, $219, from Beacon Lighting.

Lucci Equinox LED colour-shifting wall sconce in Travertine, 200mm, $349, from Beacon Lighting.

SCAN ME

Show-stopping or subtle – which sconce is for you? Scan the QR code to shop.

floor



Balla floor lamp, $1085, from King Living.

Floor lamps are great for living rooms. Not only do they offer an alternative to the "big light" when you want to wind down in the evening, they work as a focal point to draw the eye upwards and create height in your space.

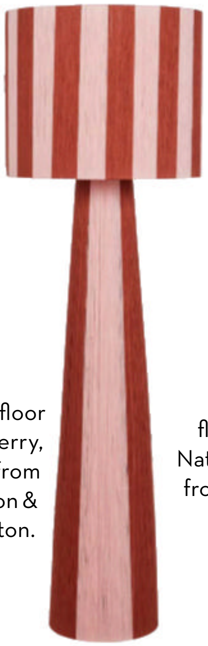
Gabby Thomas from Freedom says as well as being functional, floor lamps work as a decor piece and an expression of your individual style.

"Personally, my preference is a cantilever or hinged arm style that can be positioned behind the sofa – great for maximising space and it doubles as an overhead reading light while curled up on the sofa with a book," she says.

Anna Maria Stillone from Stillone Design says she often includes a floor lamp in the corner of a large bedroom. "Maybe with a chair and a reading spot, so that it's not only decorative, but it's also useful," she says.

Many lighting companies offer the same design in both floor and table lamps, allowing you to coordinate the look and have different lighting options at the same time.

Laize floor lamp, $449, from Freedom.



Cindy floor lamp in Berry, $420, from Fenton & Fenton.

Lucci Moka floor lamp in Natural, $389, from Beacon Lighting.

Faro sculptural floor lamp, $369, from Castlery.

Lucci Hana three-light floor lamp with linen shade, $369, from Beacon Lighting.

SCAN ME
Shop these upstanding floor lamps by scanning the QR code below.

candle

Candles are the ultimate in soft, atmospheric lighting. Lisa Carrick of Enjoy Living says that candles can "change the energy flow of a room, and improve your mood in the process. As you're mesmerised by the dancing shadows of the flickering flame, your shoulders drop, your stress levels reduce, and you feel more relaxed," she says. "And candlelight is synonymous with romance, which is why they're a go-to in a marriage proposal."

When choosing candles, you can group single glass-encased candles together for effect, or consider a sleek modern candelabra for elegant dining. They're a great solution for an entryway or foyer.

Layering candlelight with a soft fragrance can help set a mood in a living area, but should be avoided in dining rooms where it can interfere with food aromas. A fragrant candle is a great touch in a guest powder room because it provides atmosphere without overpowering a small space. ■

Buller candlestick holder, from $39.95, from Freedom.

Hunter Candles Chiswick Collab honey and thyme candle, $49.

Tahmoor candle, $49.95, from Freedom.

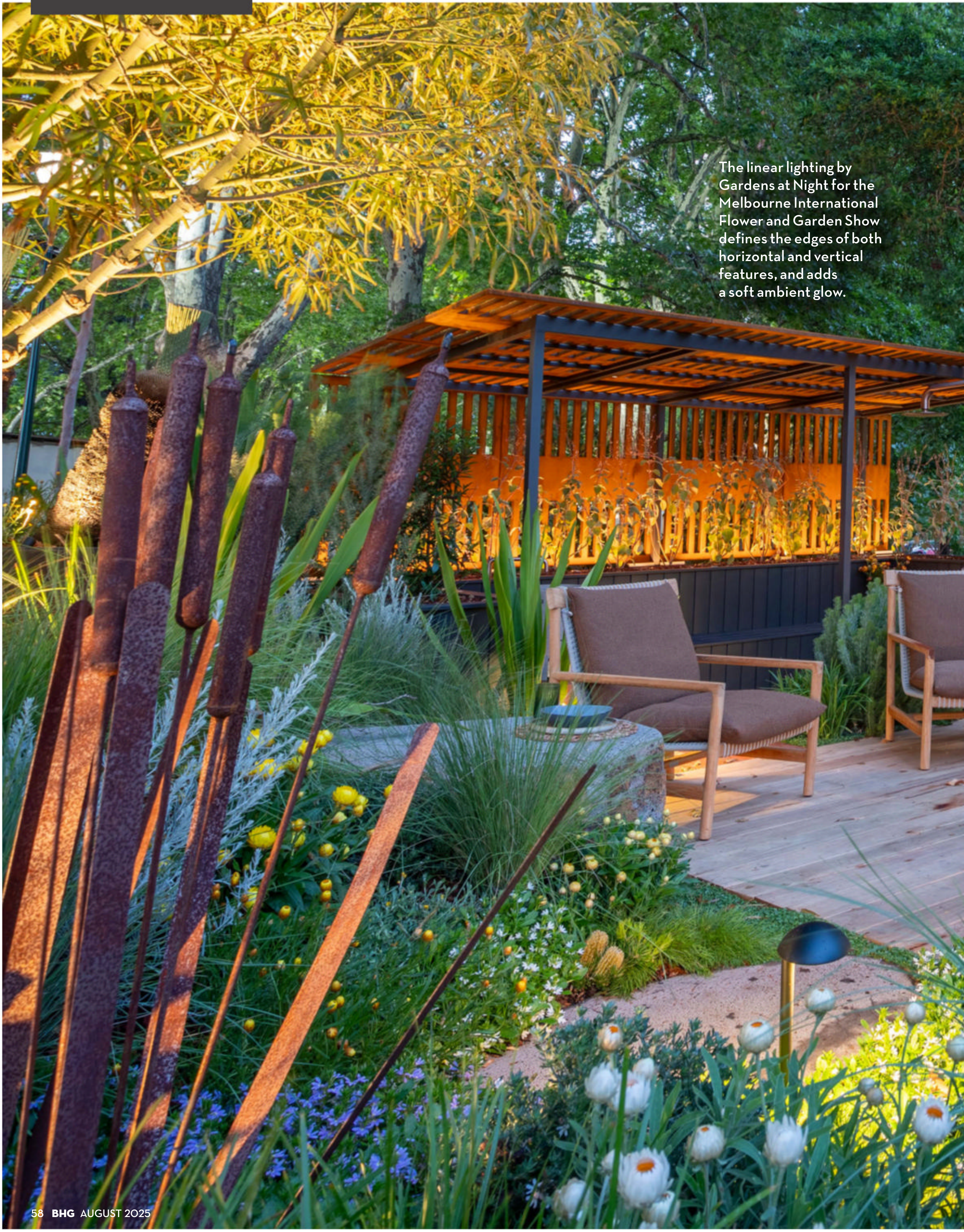
Everlasting Candle Co. Wylie signature set in Black and Wylie Clear, $80.

Hotham candlestick holder, $79.95, from Freedom.

Wyndham candlestick holder in Brass, $39.95, from Freedom.

SCAN ME
Set the mood and scene with these sensory candle options. Scan the code to shop.

Photography Will Horner, Adobe Stock. Prices are approximate and a guide only.



The linear lighting by Gardens at Night for the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show defines the edges of both horizontal and vertical features, and adds a soft ambient glow.

Night *light*

Whether it's a welcoming entrance, a tranquil courtyard or an entertaining space, lighting helps define the purpose and mood of a garden at night.

Photography MITCH LYONS, STEPHEN LAURENCE, GARDENS AT NIGHT

Lighting can transform any garden into an inviting space after dark, whether it's a compact city courtyard or a rambling rural property. Security and safety are often paramount, but take it a step further and you can have garden lighting that creates ambience or highlights sculptural plants and architectural features. Most importantly at this time of the year, lighting extends the accessibility of outdoor areas into the night.

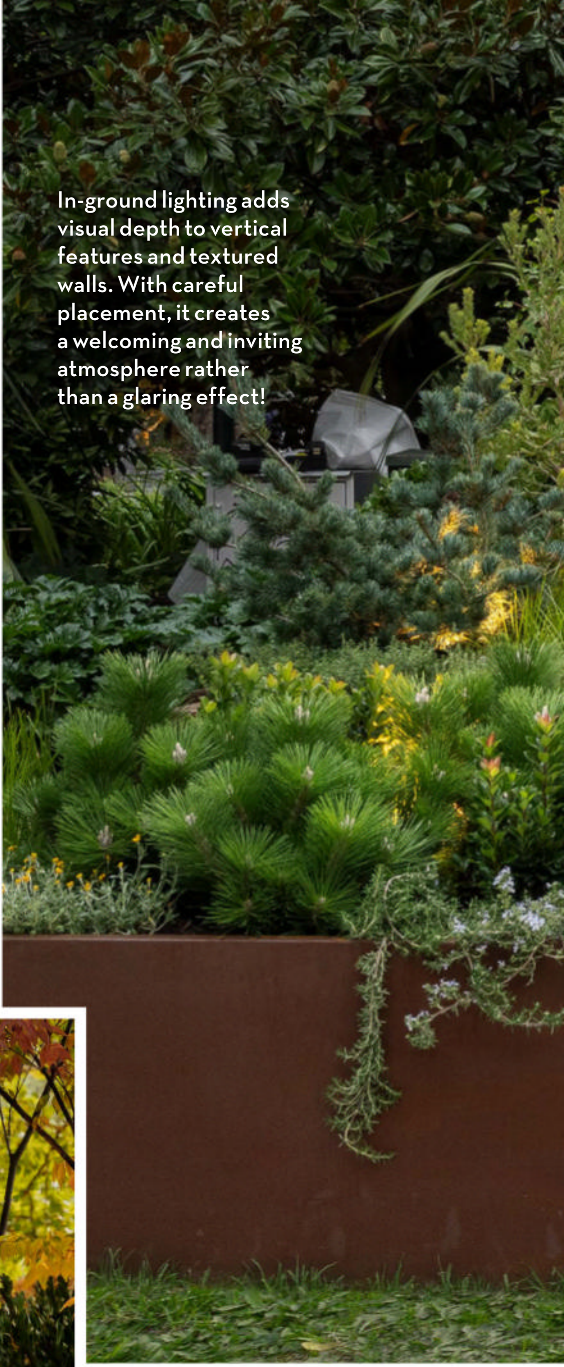
Plan early

Garden lighting is best planned in the original design or renovation process by working with your landscape designer and lighting professional. The result is simpler installation and a more seamless, integrated outcome.

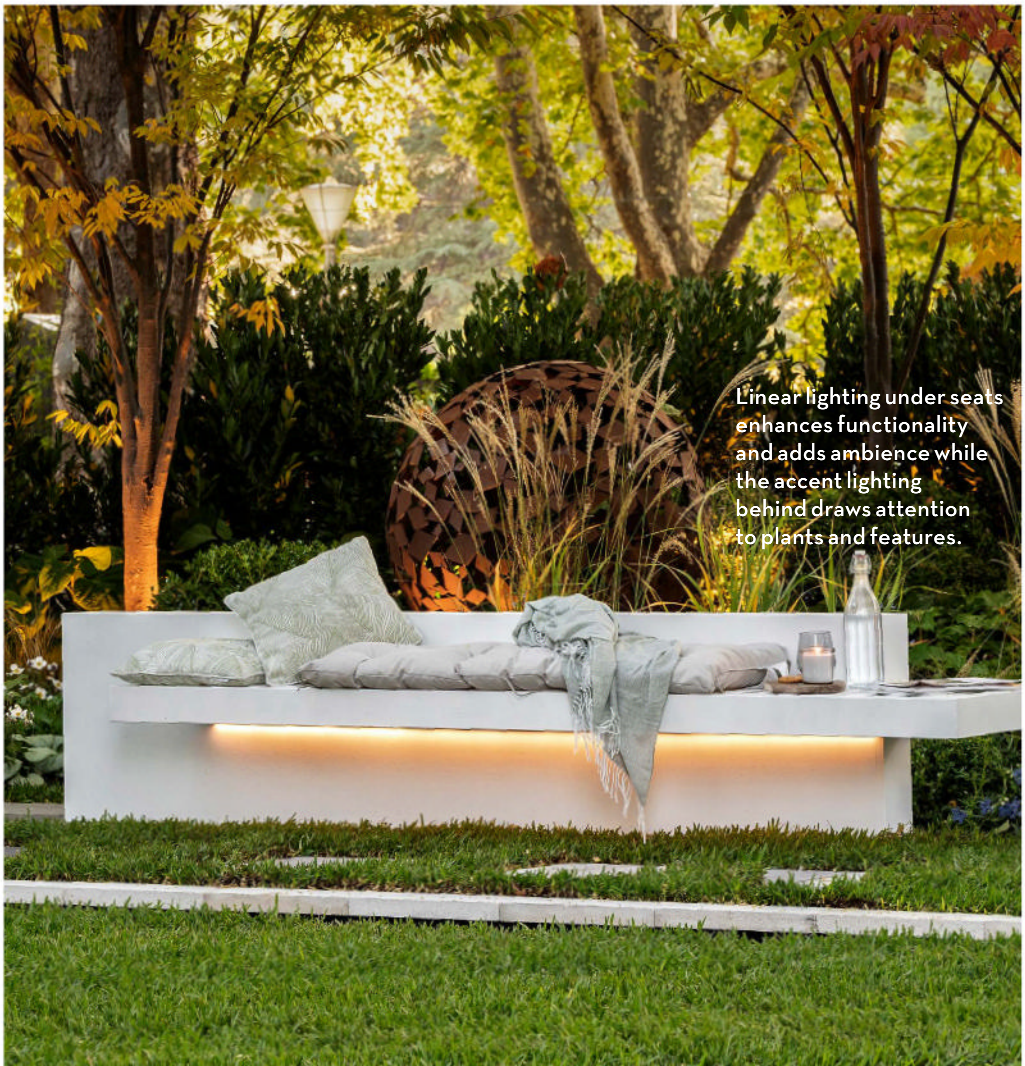
Start by knowing how each space will be used, advises Gardens at Night, a nationwide company specialising in the design and manufacture of energy-efficient outdoor lighting. Is it for entertaining, a quiet retreat, children's play or a utility area? Identify areas of movement, key features you want to highlight, and the intended ambience for each space. Consider changes in levels through the garden, seating areas and architectural details.

A lighting professional will give advice on the direction of light, the optimal distance a fixture should be from an object, the surface type and mounting positions, and which areas benefit from reflected or diffused light.

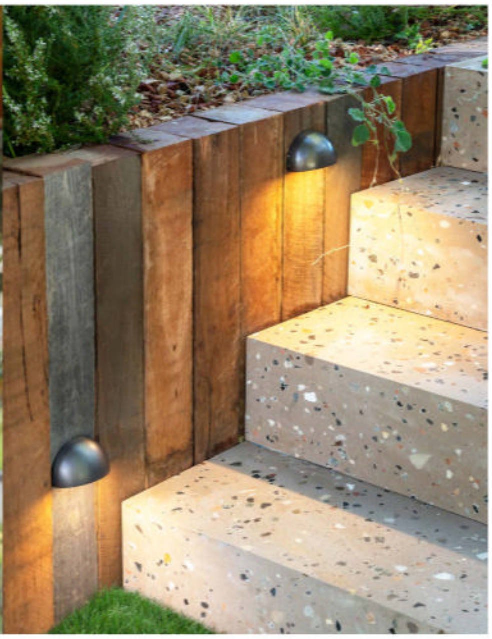
Knowing where the lighting will be controlled from is also important, as it influences wiring, cabling, power requirements and any necessary installation fixtures.



In-ground lighting adds visual depth to vertical features and textured walls. With careful placement, it creates a welcoming and inviting atmosphere rather than a glaring effect!



Linear lighting under seats enhances functionality and adds ambience while the accent lighting behind draws attention to plants and features.



FAR LEFT Your aim with garden lighting is to not only enjoy your garden in the evenings, but also see it from another perspective with the different play of light and shadows. Wall lights have the overall intention of increasing visibility at night but they can also be used to discreetly light a functional spot without blinding you.
CENTRE Wall lights cast playful shadows you don't experience during the day.
LEFT Step lights ensure you can make a safe transition between different levels. These also highlight the textures of the steps and the surrounding area.

You can highlight special plants that don't get enough attention during the day with carefully placed accent lighting.

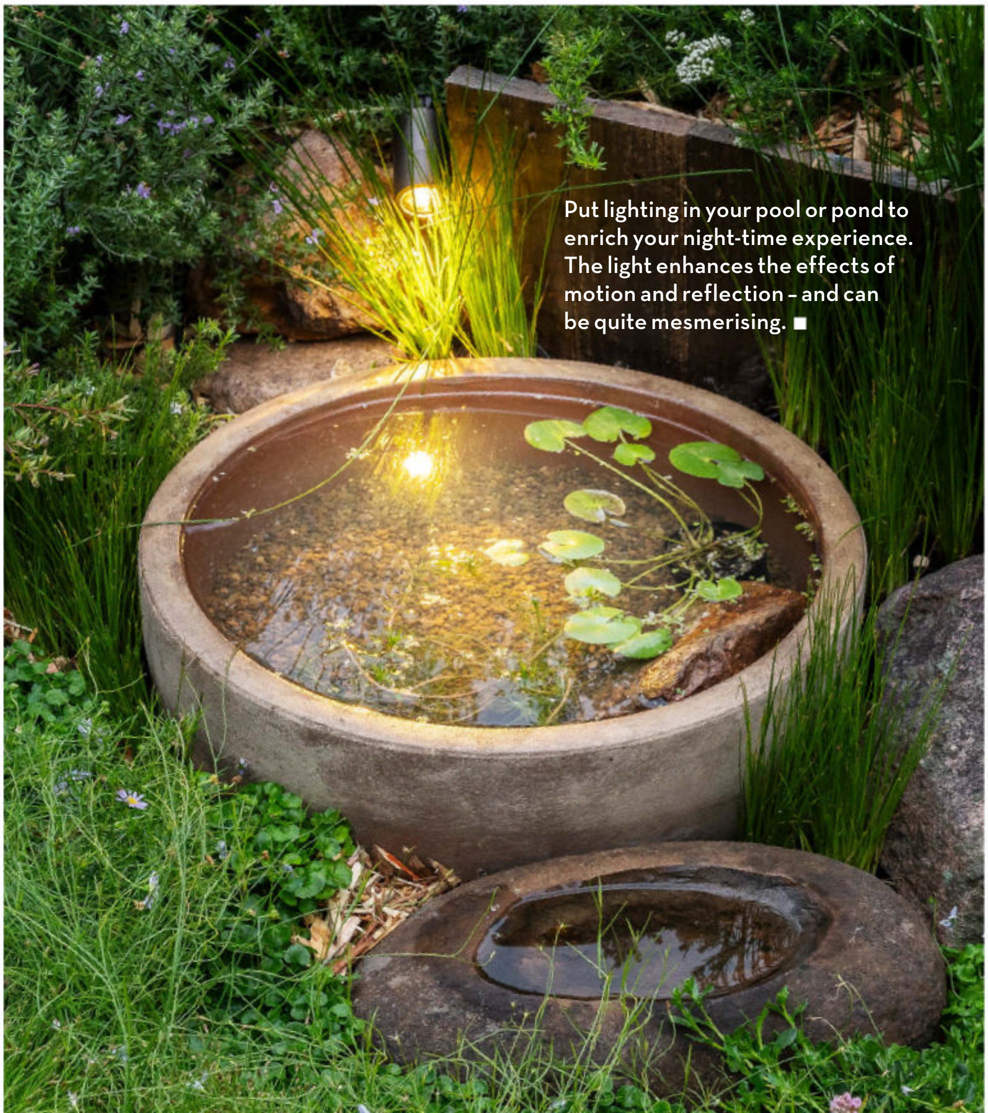
RIGHT Overhead lighting fitted on walls is a functional way to direct light. As an alternative you can use hanging lights to bring your cooking and alfresco dining spaces to life.
CENTRE Accent lighting focused on the raked gravel of a serene Japanese-themed garden accentuates the depth of the curves and adds a sense of theatre.
FAR RIGHT Path lighting not only guides you as you meander through a garden at night, but when elevated like this it can shine a light on your garden plants.

> “GARDEN LIGHTING SEAMLESSLY CONNECTS INDOORS AND OUT, ENHANCING FUNCTION AND AMBIENCE.”
>
> GARDENS AT NIGHT

Quality makes the difference

According to Gardens at Night, it’s important to choose materials that deliver lasting quality and reliability. Materials such as corrosion-resistant brass offer long-term performance, even in coastal or high-exposure environments. Consistency in colour, typically a warm light around 2700K, results a cohesive look throughout your garden.

As more homeowners are considering environmentally sustainable solutions such as solar energy, a holistic approach that combines these practices with high-quality, energy-efficient and durable fittings ensures long-term reliability.



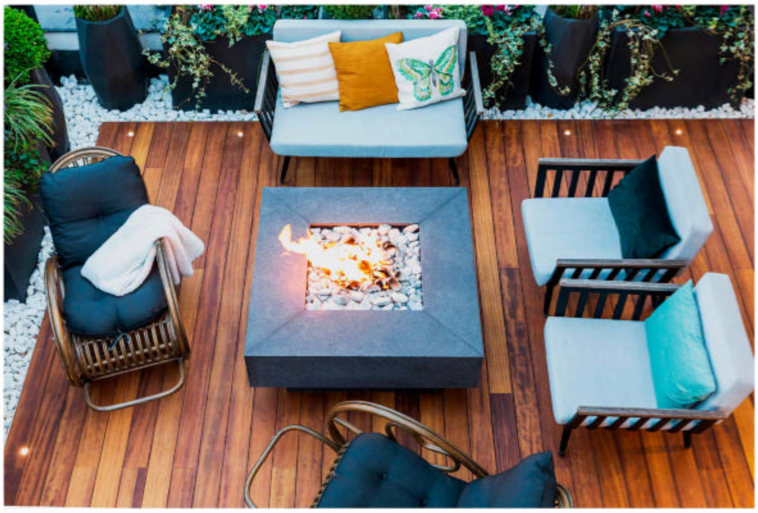
Put lighting in your pool or pond to enrich your night-time experience. The light enhances the effects of motion and reflection – and can be quite mesmerising. ■

C'mon baby, light my fire!

Stay warm outdoors during winter days and nights – and be mesmerised by the dancing flames from a wood or gas heater.

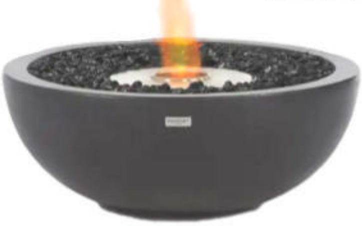
Gardens are no longer separate from our homes. They've become extensions of our indoor rooms, allowing us to connect more easily with nature. This doesn't have to stop when the chill sets in. We cook, eat, entertain, relax or meditate outside when the weather's warm, and with outdoor heating we can maintain these indulgences in winter.

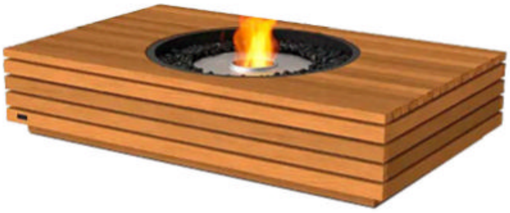
Outdoor heating lets you effortlessly blend the comforts of indoors with the freshness of the outdoors. Whether it's a simple firepit, an elegant chiminea or, in the latest trend, a full-blown fireplace with chimney, fuelled with wood or gas, the quest for fresh air becomes a simple step over the threshold.

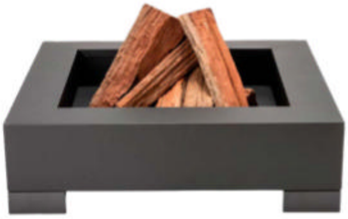


LEFT Many gas-fuelled firepits come with lids that convert them into drink and snack tables and protect the gas components under the decorative stones from rain. **ABOVE RIGHT** A firepit turns your summer retreat into a haven you can use all year round, allowing you to see how your garden outlook changes with the seasons. **RIGHT** A timber deck is a no-no for wood-fuelled firepits, but the gas-fired variety will give you the ambience you crave!

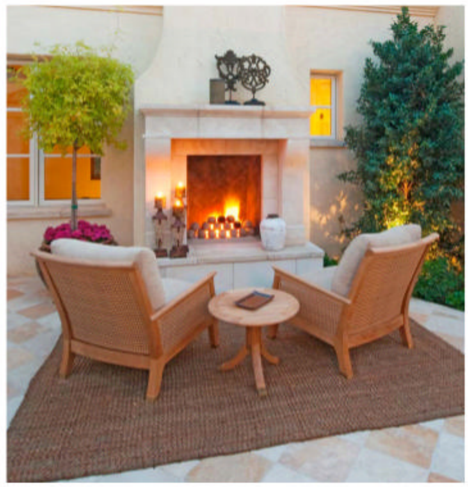
BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT EcoSmart Ethanol Mix 600 firepit, $995, and EcoSmart Ethanol Martini firepit table, $2995, from Outdoor Elegance; Mimosa steel square firepit, 70cm wide, $75, from Bunnings.







Prices are approximate and a guide only.



ABOVE Let your imagination go wild with an ultra-modern fireplace that includes a seating slab, a stylised mantelpiece and the cutest little chimney on top!

RIGHT Now this is how you take the indoors outside! A blazing fireplace complete with traditional mantelpiece and rising chimney will have you sitting, reading and snoozing from daytime into the twilight hours!

Safety *considerations*

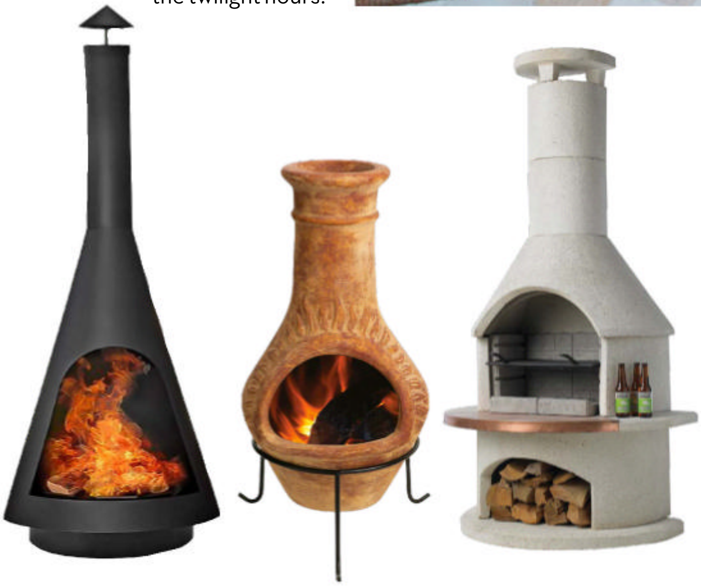
Follow these tips to safeguard your home and your loved ones when using outdoor heating equipment.

Timber-fuelled FIREPITS

- **Place on a stable, level surface,** but not on anything flammable such as a wooden deck or lawn. Keep it clear of overhead foliage or structures such as shade cloths and other combustible materials.
- **Ensure the area is well ventilated** but not directly exposed to wind.
- **Only burn clean, dry, well-seasoned wood.** The Firewood Association of Australia advises against burning treated wood, decking, painted or stained planks, old sleepers or shipping pallets, as these have usually been treated with chemicals that may be toxic to inhale.
- **Keep wood dry** as wet wood burns poorly, produces excessive smoke and potentially generates hazardous air pollutants.
- **Check for a total fire ban** – you can't use a firepit when it's in place.
- **Have a responsible adult** watch and control the fire and keep an eye on children and pets.
- **Prepare a fire extinguisher** or water for putting out the fire when you're finished.

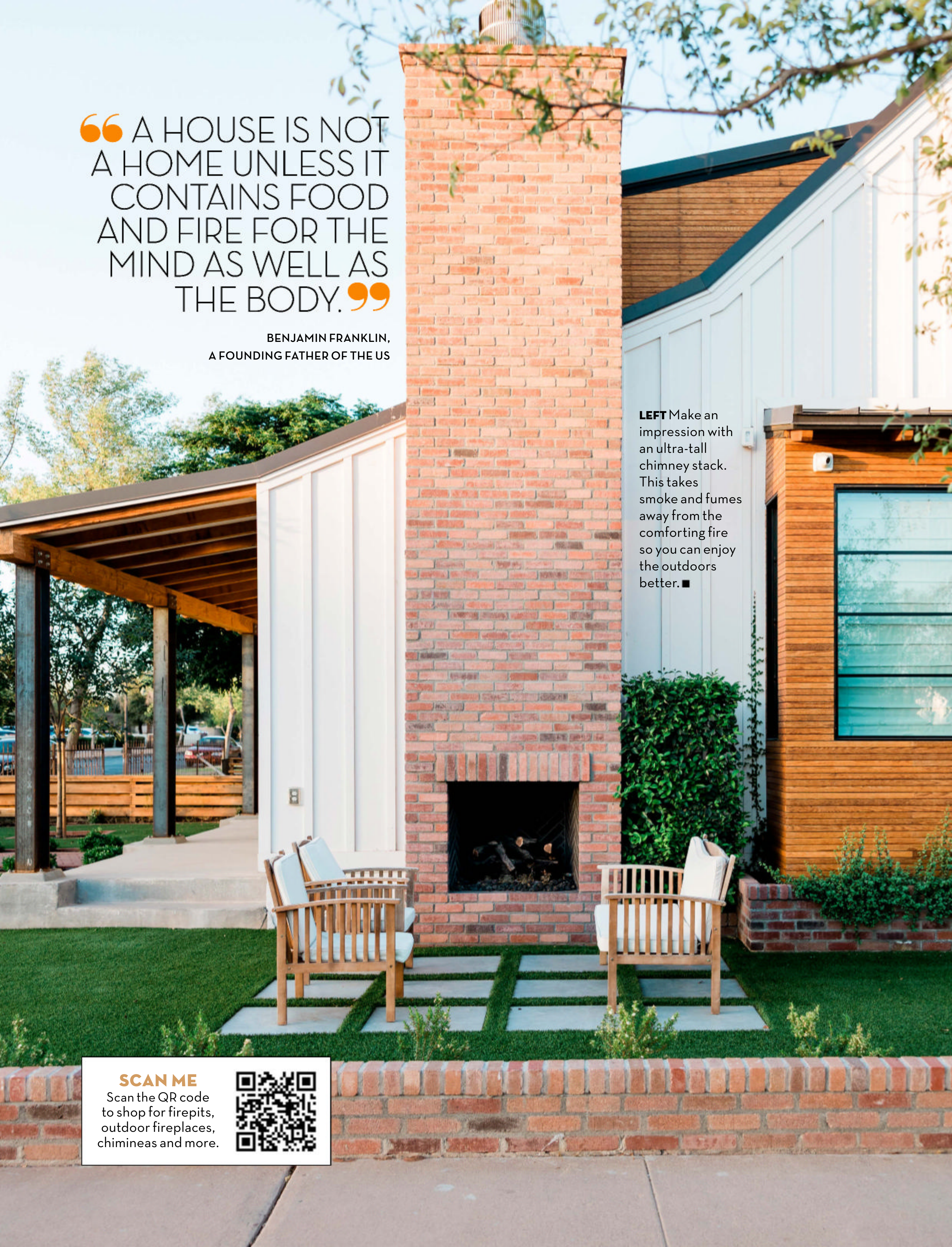
Portable GAS-FIRED HEATER

- **Keep clear of awnings,** shade cloths and other combustible materials. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for clearance levels and other safety issues.
- **Position the heater** in a well-ventilated area, not directly exposed to wind.
- **Never store indoors** – it should only be kept in a secure outdoor site.
- **Have a responsible adult** with knowledge about safety issues who can keep a close eye on children and pets.
- **Keep away from rain** or excessive moisture as this can affect gas ignition and flow, lead to corrosion of metal parts, and seep into electric components. Cover with waterproof material when not in use.
- **Follow manufacturer's instructions** on maintenance. Outdoor gas heaters require regular servicing when gas cylinders and hose fittings are checked. Heaters must be Australian Gas Association certified (shown on heater label).



BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT Modern Collective Shrigley firepit, 105cm, $149, from Temple & Webster; Charmate Fuego clay chiminea, 990mm, $299, from Mitre 10; Buschbeck 3-in-1 outdoor barbecue, pizza oven and fireplace, $2799, from Buschbeck.

Prices are approximate and a guide only.



> “A HOUSE IS NOT A HOME UNLESS IT CONTAINS FOOD AND FIRE FOR THE MIND AS WELL AS THE BODY.”
>
> BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,
> A FOUNDING FATHER OF THE US

LEFT Make an impression with an ultra-tall chimney stack. This takes smoke and fumes away from the comforting fire so you can enjoy the outdoors better. ■

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code to shop for firepits, outdoor fireplaces, chimineas and more.

souper

Dip into a bowl of piping hot soup and chase the chills away.

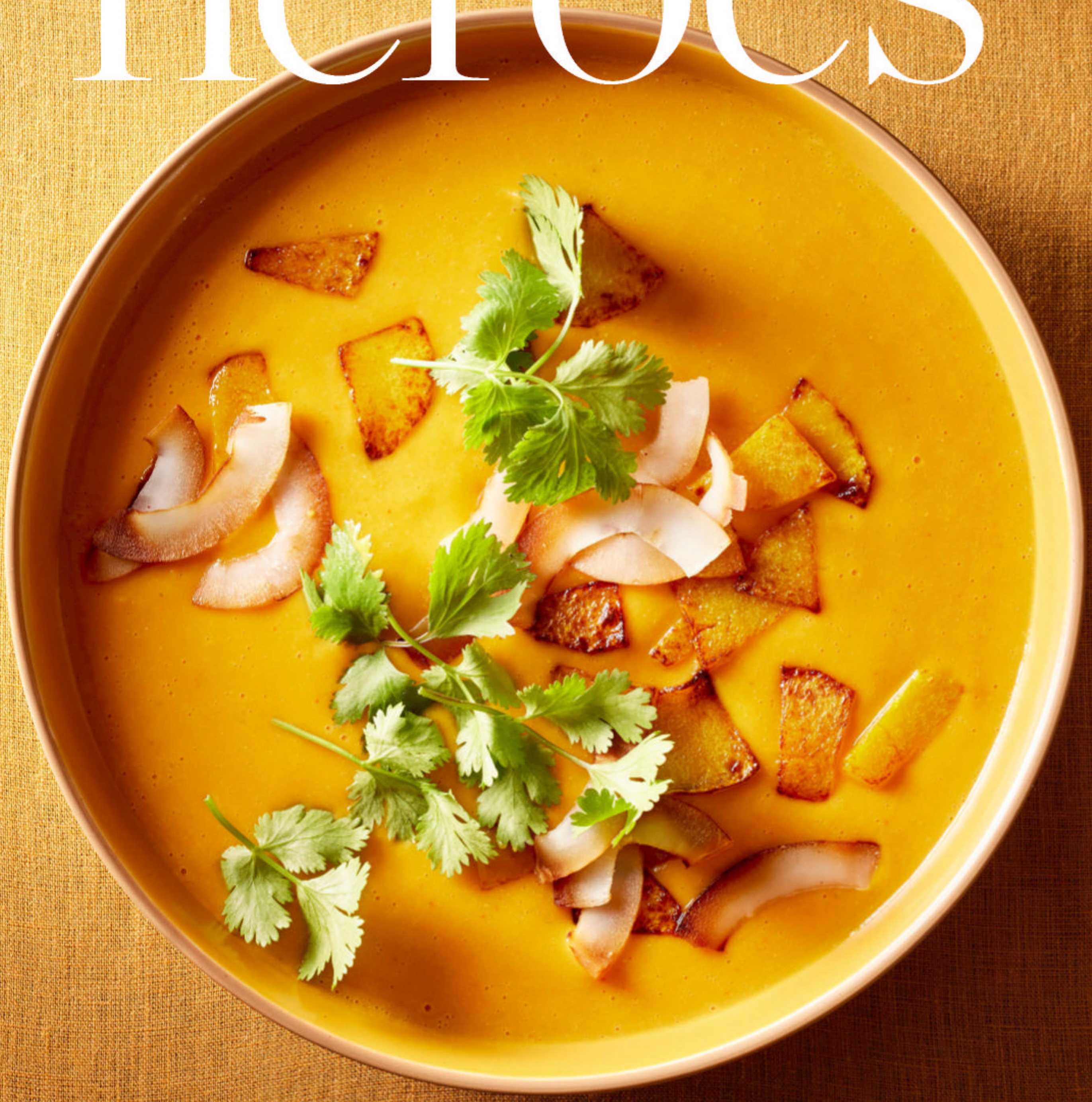
Photography CARSON DOWNING *Styling* KELSEY MOYLAN *Recipes* EMILY TEEL

SMOKY BEETROOT AND POTATO SOUP

Start with all the things you love about a tasty potato soup, then add beetroot and chipotle for a gorgeous colour and an earthy flavour. Top with a swirl of sour cream, chives and crispy bacon to make this soup a real masterpiece.

Recipe on page 72

heroes



COCONUT-CURRY PUMPKIN SOUP

This curried pumpkin soup brings together Thai-inspired flavours with nourishing whole ingredients. Red lentils and coconut milk provide the velvety texture and lime juice adds a bright finish. Creamy, spicy and deeply comforting, it's a soul-soothing bowl of goodness.

Recipe on page 72

“FLAVOUR-PACKED TOPPERS TASTE AND

CREAMY ROASTED CAPSICUM AND TOMATO SOUP
Finished with a pan-fried capsicum garnish and a sprinkle of fresh basil, this rich tomato soup looks as good as it tastes. A weeknight winner that’s ready in just 25 minutes, it’s made with a nourishing blend of pantry staples and a clever silken tofu twist.

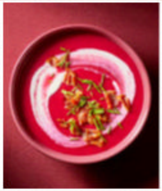
Recipe on page 72

LOOK GREAT. THEY REALLY ELEVATE A SOUP. ”

SARAH MURPHY, SENIOR FOOD EDITOR

ZUCCHINI-ZHUG SOUP WITH HALOUMI CROUTONS
Perfect for when you need a vegie-powered pick-me-up, this fresh zucchini soup stars a zesty Middle Eastern herb sauce and golden cheese croutons. Cannellini beans and kale add heartiness, while roasted cherry tomatoes bring a sweet, smoky finish.

Recipe on page 73



SMOKY BEETROOT AND POTATO SOUP

Preparation time 10 mins
Cooking time 1 hour 5 mins
Serves 6

1 Tbsp olive oil
200g rindless bacon rashers, chopped
1 brown onion, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1kg Sebago potatoes, peeled, coarsely chopped
1 litre salt-reduced vegetable stock
220g beetroot, peeled and coarsely chopped
1 Tbsp chipotle in adobo sauce
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
3 Tbsp lemon juice
Sour cream, chopped chives, to serve

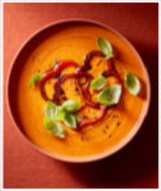
STEP 1 In a large saucepan, heat oil on medium heat. Cook bacon, stirring occasionally, for 4–5 minutes or until brown and crisp. Transfer to a paper-towel lined plate (leave oil in the pan).
STEP 2 Add onion, celery and garlic to the same pan. Cook on medium heat, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes or until vegetables begin to caramelise. Stir in potatoes, stock, beetroot and chipotle. Season. Bring to the boil on high heat. Reduce heat to medium. Simmer, covered, for 45 minutes or until all vegetables are very tender.
STEP 3 Remove pan from heat. Using a stick blender, puree soup until very smooth. Stir in lemon juice. Serve with sour cream, chives and bacon.

COCONUT-CURRY PUMPKIN SOUP

Preparation time 10 mins
Cooking time 40 mins
Serves 6

2 Tbsp coconut oil or vegetable oil
1 brown onion, chopped
3 Tbsp Massaman or red curry paste
1 medium (about 1kg) butternut pumpkin, peeled, seeded, cut in 2.5cm cubes
1 litre salt-reduced vegetable stock
400ml can coconut milk
1 cup dried red lentils
2 Tbsp lime juice
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
Toasted coconut flakes, coriander and lime wedges, to serve

STEP 1 In large saucepan, heat oil on medium heat. Cook onion, stirring occasionally, for 3 minutes or until softened but not brown. Add curry paste and cook, stirring, for 1–2 minutes or until fragrant. Stir in pumpkin, stock, coconut milk and lentils. Bring to the boil on high heat. Reduce heat to low. Simmer, covered, for 30 minutes or until pumpkin is very tender and lentils have broken down.
STEP 2 Use a stick blender to puree the soup until very smooth. If needed, add extra water or stock, ¼ cup at a time, to achieve your desired consistency. Stir in lime juice and season to taste.
STEP 3 Top soup with toasted coconut and coriander and serve with lime wedges.



CREAMY ROASTED CAPSICUM AND TOMATO SOUP

Preparation time 15 mins
Cooking time 15 mins
Serves 4

2 Tbsp olive oil, plus extra, to serve
1 brown onion, chopped
3 Tbsp tomato paste
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 x 400g cans cherry tomatoes
450g jar roasted red capsicums, drained
300g silken tofu, drained
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
Fresh basil leaves and pan-fried red capsicum slices, to serve

STEP 1 In a large saucepan, heat oil on medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes or until softened. Add tomato paste and garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add tomatoes and roasted red capsicum, crushing the tomatoes with the side of a spoon as you add them. Add the silken tofu.
STEP 2 Use a stick blender to puree soup until very smooth. If needed, add water, ¼ cup at a time, to achieve your desired consistency. Simmer on medium heat for 5 minutes. Season.
STEP 3 Serve soup drizzled with extra oil and topped with fresh basil and pan-fried red capsicum slices.

COOK'S TIP

For an extra-velvety finish, transfer the soup in batches to a high-powered blender. Cover and blend until very smooth. Return to the pan and reheat.

ZUCCHINI-ZHUG SOUP WITH HALOUMI CROUTONS

Preparation time 15 mins
Cooking time 40 mins
Serves 6

2 x 250g punnets cherry tomatoes on vine, cut into small clusters
¼ cup olive oil
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
1 brown onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, crushed
2 medium zucchini, chopped
1 litre salt-reduced vegetable stock
225g block haloumi, cut into 1cm cubes and patted dry
2 x 400g cans cannellini beans, drained
2 cups thinly sliced fresh kale

ZHUG

1 green chilli, seeds removed, roughly chopped
2 cloves garlic, bruised
½ tsp ground coriander
½ tsp ground cumin
¼ tsp ground cardamom
1 cup flat-leaf parsley leaves and stems
1 cup coriander leaves and stems
2 Tbsp lemon juice
¼ cup olive oil

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced. Line an oven tray with baking paper. Place tomatoes on the tray. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon oil. Season. Roast for 13-15 minutes or until tomatoes soften and start to split. Set aside until ready to serve.
STEP 2 Meanwhile, for zhug, in a mini food processor or mortar and pestle combine chilli, garlic, ground coriander, cumin and cardamom. Pulse to a fine paste. Add parsley, fresh coriander and half the lemon juice. Pulse until the herbs make a rough puree. Season. Add remaining 1 tablespoon lemon juice and pulse to combine. Add ¼ cup oil and process until sauce lightens in colour and oil is emulsified (stop before the sauce is completely uniform – it should look bright green with flecks of herbs).
STEP 3 In a large stockpot, heat 1 tablespoon oil on medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring occasionally, for 3 minutes or until softened but not brown. Add garlic and zucchini and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Stir in stock. Bring to the boil on high heat. Reduce heat to low. Simmer, covered, for 10 minutes or until the zucchini is tender.
STEP 4 Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large frying pan on medium heat. Cook haloumi for 1-2 minutes each side or until browned. Remove from pan.
STEP 5 Gently stir beans, kale and ¼ cup zhug into the soup. Cook for 2 minutes or until the beans are heated through and the kale has softened. Use a stick blender to puree the soup to the desired texture. Serve soup drizzled with extra zhug, topped with haloumi and roasted cherry tomatoes.

COOK'S TIP

You can leave this as a chunky soup and not blend it. It's just as delicious! ■

Cinnamon *sensations*

Fill your days with sugar and spice. These sweet cinnamon treats will lift your spirits, one delicious bite at a time.

STUFFED SNICKER DOODLES
Recipe on page 78

Photography CARSON DOWNING *Styling* KELSEY MOYLAN *Recipes* EMILY NIENHAUS

CHAI-SPICED KNOTS
Recipe on page 79

CINNAMON SUGAR BLONDIES

Recipe on page 80

PEAR AND BERRY COBBLER
Recipe on page 80

1/2 Tbsp/7.5ml

Get to know *cinnamon*

CEYLON

This Sri Lankan soft stick type, often called true cinnamon, comes from the inner bark of the *Cinnamomum verum* tree, a smaller plant with thinner, more papery bark than other cinnamon trees. It has a milder flavour than cassia and is better for savoury dishes as it doesn't overpower the flavour.

CASSIA

Most of the commercially available cinnamon comes from several other *Cinnamomum* trees classified as cassia. In its bark form, cassia has a rough texture, a dark brown and red colour, and it's rolled into thicker sticks compared to those of Ceylon cinnamon. Its flavour is also more intense and almost bitter, which leads to a hot aftertaste when it's used to excess.

STUFFED SNICKERDOODLES

Preparation time 30 mins plus 40 mins chilling
Cooking time 10 mins
Makes 15

120g unsalted butter, softened, plus 60g butter extra
¾ cup caster sugar, plus 2 Tbsp extra
½ tsp bicarb soda
½ tsp cream of tartar
1 free-range egg
½ tsp vanilla extract
1½ cups plain flour, plus 1 Tbsp extra
⅓ cup firmly packed brown sugar
1 Tbsp ground cinnamon, plus 1½ tsp extra
Pinch sea-salt flakes

STEP 1 In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, beat butter on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add caster sugar, bicarb soda and cream of tartar. Beat until combined, scraping sides of bowl occasionally. Beat in egg and vanilla until combined. Beat in flour. If necessary, chill dough for 30 minutes to make it easy to handle.

STEP 2 Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, combine extra butter and flour, the brown sugar, cinnamon and salt. Spoon onto a plate lined with baking paper and pat into a 10cm x 5cm rectangle. Cut into 15 equal pieces. Roll into balls. Freeze for 10 minutes or until just firm.

STEP 3 In a shallow dish, stir the extra caster sugar and cinnamon. Shape dough into 15 balls about 4cm wide (about 2 tablespoons each). Flatten each ball with the palm of your hand to form a 6.5cm circle. Place a ball of filling in the centre of each. Wrap dough around filling and roll into balls again. Roll in cinnamon-sugar mixture to coat. Chill dough balls for 30 minutes.

STEP 4 Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced. Line three oven trays with baking paper. Arrange dough balls slightly apart on trays. Bake for 10 minutes or until edges are set and bases are light brown. Cool on trays for 3 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

CHAI-SPICED KNOTS

Preparation time 20 mins plus 2 hours 5 mins resting
Cooking time 15 mins
Makes 12

- **2¾ cups plain flour, plus extra to dust**
- **¼ cup caster sugar**
- **1 tsp ground cinnamon, plus 2 Tbsp extra**
- **½ tsp ground ginger, plus ¼ tsp extra**
- **½ tsp ground cardamom, plus ¼ tsp extra**
- **¼ tsp ground cloves**
- **2¼ tsp dried yeast**
- **1 cup milk**
- **60g butter, chilled, chopped, plus 125g extra, softened**
- **½ cup brown sugar**
- **1 tsp vanilla extract**
- **1 free-range egg**
- **1 Tbsp water, plus 1 Tbsp extra**
- **1 Tbsp honey**
- **1 Tbsp raw sugar**

STEP 1 In a large bowl, whisk together flour, caster sugar, cinnamon, ginger, cardamom, cloves and yeast.

STEP 2 In a small saucepan, heat milk and butter over medium heat, stirring frequently, until butter is nearly melted. Slowly add this to the flour mixture, stirring until a dough forms. Knead dough on a lightly floured surface for 8–10 minutes, until smooth (or in a stand mixer with a dough hook for 5 minutes). The dough will be sticky but becomes easier to handle after rising.

STEP 3 Place dough in a lightly greased bowl and cover. Set aside in a warm place for 1 hour or until doubled in size.

STEP 4 Meanwhile, for the filling, in a bowl stir the softened butter, brown sugar, vanilla and extra cinnamon, cardamom and ginger until combined.

STEP 5 Line a large oven tray with baking paper. On a floured surface, roll dough into a 51cm x 30.5cm rectangle. Spread filling evenly over the dough. Bring a short side over two-thirds of the way, then fold remaining third over the top (like a letter). Gently roll folded dough with a rolling pin to press against filling. Let rest for 5 minutes.

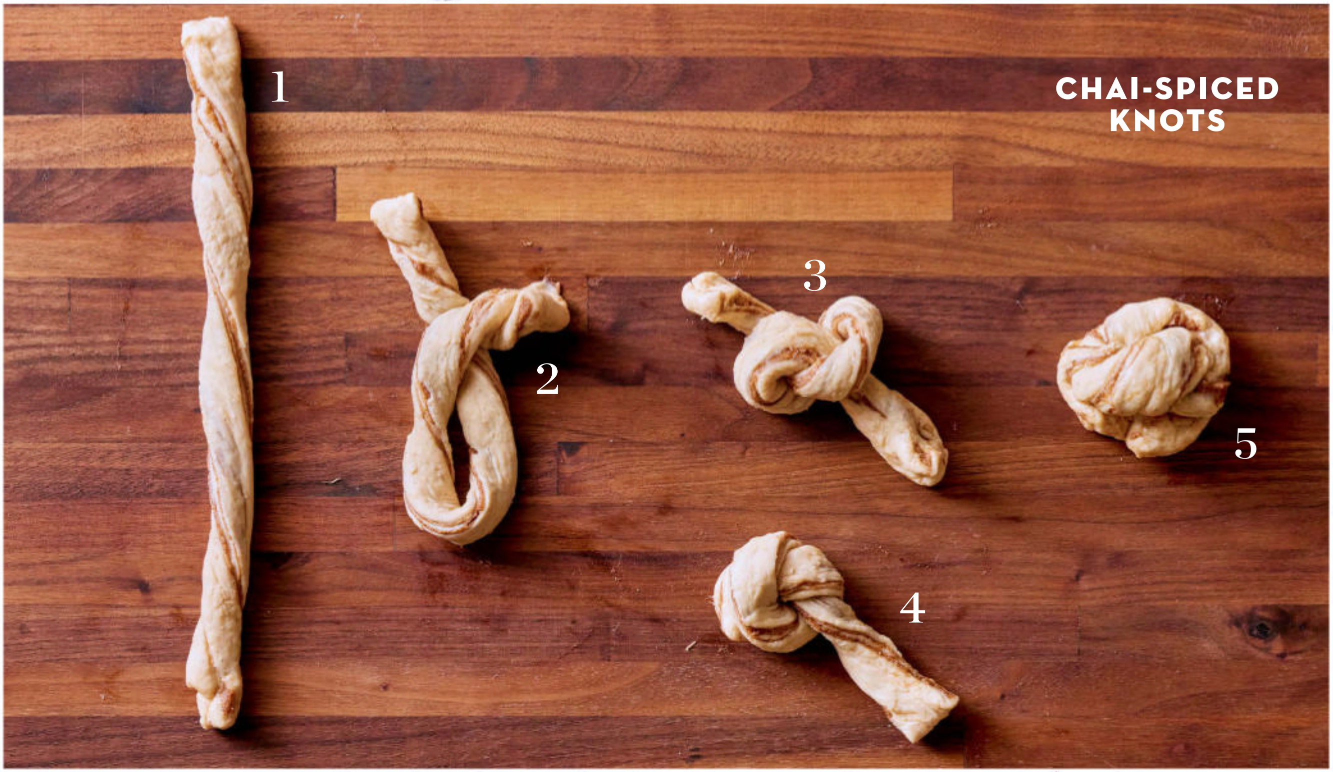
STEP 6 Cut dough into 12 strips 2.5cm wide. Gently pull a strip, twist slightly (see 1 below), and tie into a loose knot (see 2 & 3). Tuck loose ends under the bun (see 4 & 5). Place on the prepared oven tray. Repeat with remaining strips. Cover loosely with a clean tea towel and set aside in a warm place for 1 hour.

STEP 7 Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan-forced. Beat egg and water in a bowl. In another bowl, stir honey and extra water until honey dissolves.

STEP 8 Brush buns with egg wash. Sprinkle with sugar. Bake for 12–15 minutes or until golden. Immediately spoon honey drizzle over the top.

COOK'S TIP

You can store the cooled buns in an airtight container for two days or freeze them for up to three months.



PEAR AND BERRY COBBLER

Preparation time 20 mins plus cooling
Cooking time 45 mins
Serves 8

5 cups chopped pears, peeled if desired (5 to 6 medium pears)
1 cup fresh or frozen raspberries
1 cup frozen blueberries
¼ cup plain flour
½ cup caster sugar
1 Tbsp lemon juice
1 tsp ground cinnamon, plus ¼ tsp extra
¼ tsp ground ginger
30g butter
¼ cup raw sugar

SCONES

1½ cups plain flour, plus extra for dusting
2 Tbsp caster sugar
2 tsp baking powder
½ tsp ground cinnamon
85g unsalted butter, chilled, chopped
½ cup milk

CINNAMON WHIPPED CREAM

½ cup thickened cream
1 Tbsp pure icing sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
Pinch ground cinnamon

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced.
STEP 2 In a large bowl, toss pears, raspberries, blueberries, flour, caster sugar, lemon juice, cinnamon and ginger. Transfer to a 2-litre oval baking dish.
STEP 3 For scones, in a medium bowl combine flour, sugar, baking powder and cinnamon. Add butter and toss to coat. Using fingertips, rub in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Make a well in the centre and add milk all at once. Using a flat-bladed knife, stir just until dough just comes together.
STEP 4 Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Knead gently until dough holds together. Pat or lightly roll dough into an 18cm circle, about 1.25cm thick. Cut with a floured 4cm square or round cutter, rerolling scraps as needed.
STEP 5 In a microwave-safe bowl, melt the butter. Place raw sugar in a small bowl. Brush tops of scones with melted butter, then dip in sugar. Place scones sugar side up, on fruit mixture (see Cook's Tip). Dust over remaining cinnamon using a fine-mesh sieve.
STEP 6 Bake for 40–45 minutes or until bubbly and the top is golden. Loosely cover with foil for the last 10 minutes if necessary to prevent overbrowning. Set aside to cool on a wire rack for 30 minutes before serving.
STEP 7 For the cinnamon whipped cream, using a mixer on medium speed, beat the cream, icing sugar, vanilla and cinnamon in a medium bowl until soft peaks form. Serve the cobbler topped with cinnamon whipped cream.

COOK'S TIP

If you have more scones than will fit on the cobbler, place them on an oven tray lined with baking paper. Bake with the cobbler until golden brown, about 10–12 minutes.

CINNAMON SUGAR BLONDIES

Preparation time 20 mins
Cooking time 35 mins
Makes 24 bars

2 cups plain flour
2 tsp ground cinnamon, plus 1 tsp extra
1 tsp baking powder
¼ tsp bicarb soda
2 cups brown sugar
150g unsalted butter, plus 1 Tbsp butter, melted
2 free-range eggs
2 tsp vanilla extract
¼ cup caster sugar

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced. Line a 22cm square baking pan with baking paper, extending paper over the edges of the pan.
STEP 2 In a medium bowl, stir flour, cinnamon, baking powder and bicarb soda until combined.
STEP 3 In a medium saucepan, combine brown sugar and butter on medium heat, stirring, until butter is melted. Remove from heat. Set aside to cool slightly. Stir in eggs and vanilla. Stir in flour mixture. Pour batter into prepared baking pan, spreading evenly.
STEP 4 Bake for 25–30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the centre comes out clean.
STEP 5 In a small bowl, combine caster sugar and extra cinnamon. Brush warm bars with melted butter and sprinkle with cinnamon sugar. Set aside in pan to cool completely. Cut into bars to serve.

COOK'S TIP

To store, layer bars between sheets of baking paper in an airtight container for up to three days. You can freeze them for up to a month. ■

Better Homes and Gardens
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better cooking

[SARAH MURPHY SHARES FOODIE NEWS, PRODUCTS AND TRENDS.]

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BRILLIANT BRITTLE

Made with salted-butter caramel brittle and roasted peanuts, Whittaker's latest variety is the new addictive addition to your chocolate; $8.50 from Coles and Woolworths.

BLOOD RELATIVES

Blood oranges have a short (but delicious) season from early August to October. Smaller than other oranges, they have a subtle raspberry flavour. Choose firm-skinned fruit that feel heavy and smell fragrant.

CUP OF CALM

Including a hot cuppa in your night-time routine can help with drifting off. Pukka Night Time tea bags are caffeine-free and contain oat flower, lavender and limeflower for a bedside brew; $8.50 for a 20-pack at Coles and Woolworths.

great taste
pukka
night time
ORGANIC
HERBAL TEA

FEEL-GOOD FIZZ

Zero-alcohol Kakadu Kitchen x OzHarvest Conscious Drink is crafted from rescued blueberries and wild-harvested native botanicals, ethically sourced from First Nations-owned companies; 750ml, $30, **shop.ozharvest.org**.

ULTIMATE MULTITASKER

With its 6-in-1 Pro cooking settings, LG InstaView Series 9 Full Steam Ovens can steam, air-fry, sous-vide, dehydrate, be used as a convection oven and have a pizza mode; $3699, **lg.com/au/cooking**. ■

Photography Ben Dearnley (blood oranges). Prices are approximate and a guide only.

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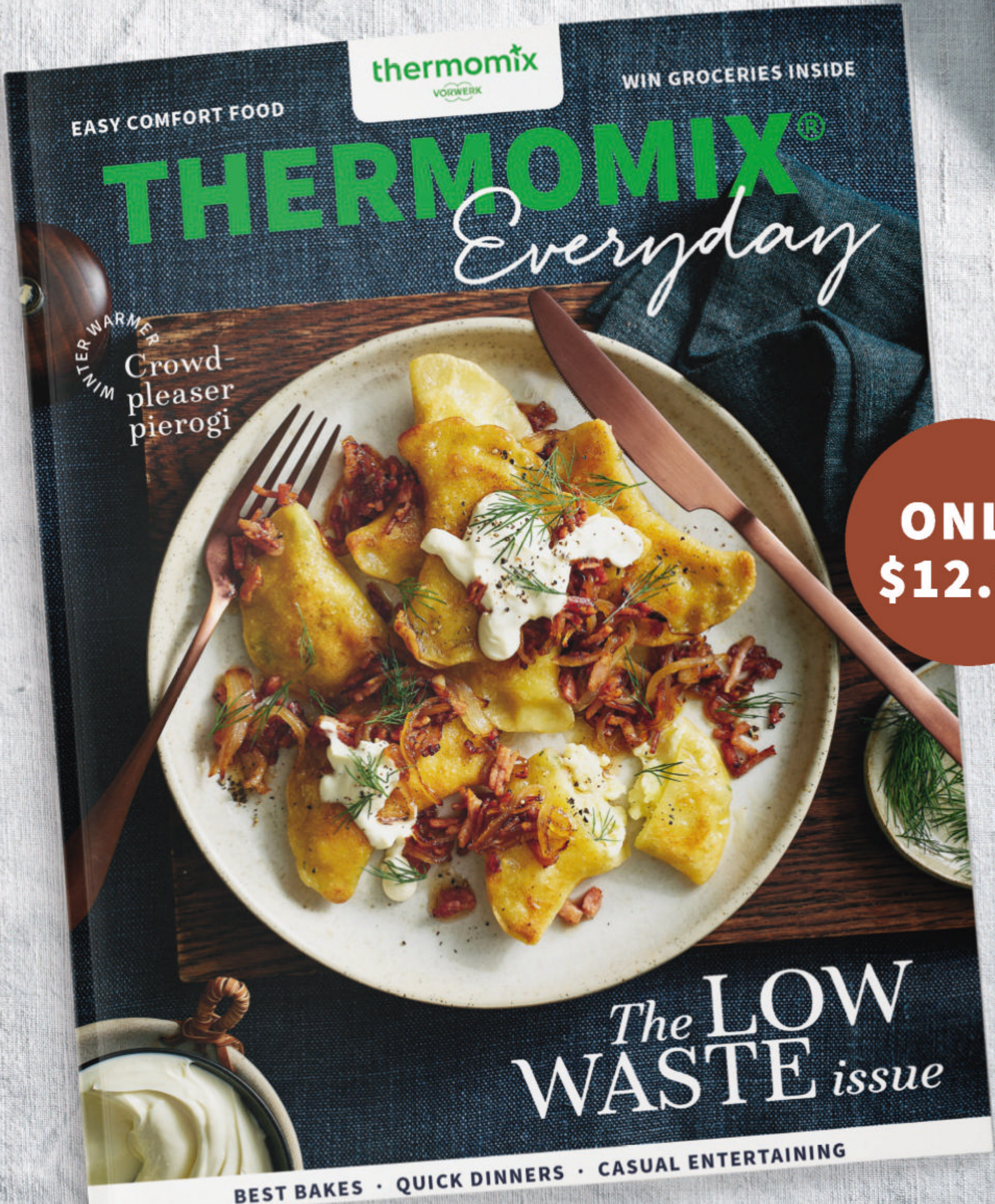
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COLIN'S CHICKEN DUMPLINGS WITH PEARL BARLEY BROTH
Recipe on page 88

Cooking
with Colin & Clarissa

Warm up a brisk evening with hearty winter fare that will have the whole family coming back for seconds.

Photography WILL HORNER *Styling* MICHELE CRANSTON

SEEN ON BHG TV
FRIDAYS 7.00

COLIN'S SLOW-COOKED BEEF CHEEKS WITH COUSCOUS
Recipe on page 88

COLIN FASSNIDGE AND CLARISSA FEILDEL
Join us as we show you how to make delicious dishes on *BHG* TV, Fridays at 7pm on Channel 7. For more recipes, go to **BHG.COM.AU**

COLIN'S GREEN GNOCCHI WITH BROWNED BUTTER AND BABY BEETS

Recipe on page 90

> “YOU CAN REPLACE THE LEATHERJACKET WITH ANY AVAILABLE CHEAP FISH.”
>
> COLIN FASSNIDGE

COLIN’S FISH STEW
Recipe on page 90

COLIN'S CHICKEN DUMPLINGS WITH PEARL BARLEY BROTH

Preparation time 25 mins plus 1 hour refrigeration time
Cooking time 2 hours 20 mins
Serves 4–6

2kg chicken wings
1 brown onion, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped
1 bulb garlic, halved horizontally
2 bay leaves
½ bunch thyme
Cold water to cover
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season

CHICKEN DUMPLINGS

1 Tbsp olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
1 brown onion, chopped
6 cloves garlic, sliced
200g day-old sourdough, torn into small pieces
½ bunch rosemary, finely chopped
½ bunch thyme, finely chopped
1 Tbsp ground cumin
1 Tbsp ground coriander
1 Tbsp smoked paprika
300g chicken mince
2 free-range eggs
2–3 cups diced vegetables (choose from parsnip, potato, pumpkin, sweet potato, carrots, brussels sprouts, broad beans, silverbeet, spinach and spring peas)
2 cups cooked pearl barley

STEP 1 To make the stock, place wings, onion, celery, garlic, bay leaves, thyme and enough cold water to cover in a stockpot. Bring to boil on high. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 1½–2 hours. Strain into a clean stockpot. Season.
STEP 2 To make dumplings, heat the oil in a frying pan over medium to low heat. Add onion and garlic. Cook, stirring, for 3–5 minutes or until tender but not coloured. Transfer to a large bowl.
STEP 3 Add bread, herbs and spices to a blender and process to make breadcrumbs. Add to the onion mixture along with the mince and eggs. Season. Use your hands to mix well.
STEP 4 Roll into golf-ball size balls and transfer to a tray lined with baking paper. Refrigerate 1 hour or until firm.
STEP 5 Return stock to a gentle simmer. Add root vegetables. Cook for 3–5 minutes. Add dumplings, brussels sprouts, broad beans and silverbeet. Cook for 5–8 minutes, adding peas or spinach in the final 2 minutes. The dumplings will float when cooked.
STEP 6 Divide dumplings among serving bowls. Spoon over soup. Drizzle with olive oil.

COLIN'S SLOW-COOKED BEEF CHEEKS WITH COUSCOUS

Preparation time 40 mins
Cooking time 3 hours 20 mins
Serves 4

Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
4 beef cheeks (about 1.2kg)
2 Tbsp olive oil
2 sticks celery, roughly chopped
1 brown onion, chopped
2 carrots, roughly chopped
1 bulb garlic, halved horizontally
½ bunch thyme
2 star anise
2 birdseye chillies (optional)
3 bay leaves, fresh or dried
200ml red wine (or use white wine)
1 Tbsp sugar
2 litres chicken stock or water
200g couscous
Juice of 1 lemon

STEP 1 Season beef cheeks. Heat oil in a large heavy-based saucepan on a high heat. Add beef. Sear until caramelised on both sides, then remove to a plate.
STEP 2 Add celery, onion, carrot and garlic. Cook, stirring, for 5–7 minutes or

CLARISSA'S STEAMED PORK BELLY RIBS

Recipe on page 92

until just coloured. Add thyme, star anise, chillies (if using) and bay leaves.
STEP 3 Add wine and cook until it reduces by half. Stir in sugar. Return beef to pan with stock or water. Cover and reduce heat to low. Simmer for 2–3 hours or until beef is very tender.
STEP 4 To make couscous, place couscous in a heatproof bowl over simmering water. Ladle in ½ cup of beef cooking liquid. Cover with a lid or plate and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove plate and loosen couscous with a fork. Stir in lemon juice. Season to taste.
STEP 5 Serve beef with couscous.

COOK'S TIP

If you prefer, you can cook this in a preheated (140°C) fan-forced oven for three hours after adding the stock.

COLIN'S FISH STEW

Preparation time 20 mins
Cooking time 50 mins
Serves 2–3

2–3 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 large brown onion, chopped
1 bulb fennel, white and green parts roughly chopped
50g ginger, peeled and chopped
1 bulb garlic, halved horizontally
20g fennel seeds
3 star anise
2 leatherjackets, cleaned and chopped into 3 pieces each
100ml white wine
400g can chopped tomatoes
500ml orange juice
1 litre water (approx.)
½ cup cream
2 bay leaves
1 bunch thyme
250g black mussels, scrubbed, beards removed
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season

STEP 1 Heat oil in a stockpot over a low heat. Add onion, fennel, ginger, garlic, fennel seeds and star anise. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 3–5 minutes or until onion is tender.
STEP 2 Add fish. Cook, turning, 3–4 minutes. Pour in white wine and cook until it reduces by half.
STEP 3 Add tomatoes, orange juice and enough water (about 1 litre) to cover. Stir in cream, bay leaves and thyme. Increase heat and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes or until liquid reduces by a third.
STEP 4 Strain mixture into a clean saucepan. Return to a simmer. Add mussels. Cover with a lid and cook for 6 minutes or until mussels open. Season. (Discard any mussels with shells that didn't open during cooking.)
STEP 5 Serve stew with crusty bread.

COOK'S TIP

You can use this stew as a liquid for poaching fish fillets, too.

COLIN'S GREEN GNOCCHI WITH BROWNED BUTTER AND BABY BEETS

Preparation time 30 mins
Cooking time 1 hour 5 mins
Serves 6–8

300g salted butter, chopped
½ bunch sage, chopped
100g baby capers, chopped
Juice and grated zest of 2 lemons
1 bunch baby beetroot, trimmed, thinly sliced (a mandolin is ideal)
2 Tbsp olive oil
Juice and grated zest of 1 lemon, for baby beet garnish
Sea salt and black pepper, to season

GNOCCHI
350g rock salt
1.2kg medium Desiree potatoes, scrubbed clean
1 bunch sage, chopped
1 bunch flat-leaf parsley, chopped
½ bunch rosemary, chopped
200g grated parmesan, plus extra to serve
110g plain flour, plus extra for rolling
Pinch salt
3 free-range egg yolks

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan-forced.
STEP 2 For gnocchi, spread salt on a baking tray and top with potatoes. Bake for 1 hour or until tender when pierced with a knife. Cut hot potatoes in half and push through a potato ricer into a large bowl. (If you don't have a ricer, peel the skin off the warm potatoes, then carefully press the potato flesh through a sieve with the back of a spoon.)
STEP 3 Place sage, parsley, rosemary, parmesan, flour and salt in a blender. Blend to a fine green crumb.
STEP 4 Using a spatula, roughly stir egg yolks into the warm potato (egg stops the gnocchi from breaking up in boiling water). Stir in the herb mixture.
STEP 5 Tip mixture onto a clean, lightly floured surface. Using floured hands, bring mixture together to form a green dough ball. Do not overwork the dough as this will result in tough gnocchi.
STEP 6 Break off small handfuls of dough and roll into 1.5cm thick cylinders. Cut into 2cm pieces and place on a floured tray.
STEP 7 Bring a large saucepan of salted water to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer, then gently add gnocchi. Gnocchi will float to the top when cooked. Remove with a slotted spoon, draining any excess water. Transfer to a serving bowl.
STEP 8 Place butter in a frying pan on medium-high heat. Add sage. Cook, shaking pan, until sage is crisp and the butter is nut brown. Stir in capers. Pour over gnocchi in bowl. Add juice and zest.
STEP 9 To make garnish, combine beetroot, oil, juice and zest. Season. Garnish gnocchi with beetroot slices and serve with extra parmesan.

CLARISSA'S MATCHA AND WHITE CHOCOLATE BROWNIES

Recipe on page 92

CLARISSA'S STEAMED PORK BELLY RIBS

Preparation time 15 mins plus 1 hour marinating time
Cooking time 1 hour
Serves 4

- **1kg pork belly ribs (see Cook's Tip), cut into bite-size pieces**
- **2 Tbsp vegetable oil**
- **30g fresh ginger, thinly sliced**
- **3 cloves garlic, finely chopped**
- **5 green onions, sliced**
- **2 birdseye chillies, thinly sliced, plus extra to serve**
- **Steamed white rice, to serve**

MARINADE

- **2 Tbsp fermented black beans (or 2 Tbsp black bean sauce)**
- **1 Tbsp cornstarch**
- **1 Tbsp water**
- **1 Tbsp shaoxing wine (Chinese cooking wine)**
- **1 Tbsp light soy sauce**
- **1 tsp cooking caramel (karamel masakan) or dark soy sauce**
- **1 Tbsp sesame oil**
- **1½ tsp sugar**
- **1 tsp salt**
- **1 tsp cracked black pepper**

STEP 1 To make the marinade, soak the black beans in some water for 5 minutes. Drain and coarsely chop. Put cornflour and 1 tablespoon water in a small bowl and stir to combine. In a large bowl, combine remaining marinade ingredients and stir in cornflour mixture.
STEP 2 Add pork to the marinade and toss until well coated. Leave to marinate for 1 hour. Strain pork, reserving any marinade.
STEP 3 Heat oil in a large wok on medium to low heat. Add ginger and stir-fry until light golden. Stir in garlic, the white part of the onions and chilli.
STEP 4 Increase heat to high. Arrange pork in the wok's base and up its sides. Stir-fry pork for 1–2 minutes or until lightly caramelised. Stir-fry for a further 3–4 minutes, until golden. Add reserved marinade and heat through. Transfer to a steamer or dish suited to steaming, allowing extra space for gravy.
STEP 5 Bring water to the boil in a large wok or pan. Top with a bamboo steamer or trivet and the dish with the pork. Cover with a lid. Reduce heat to low. Steam for about 50 minutes, checking periodically, until the ribs are tender.
STEP 6 Garnish pork with the remaining sliced onion and chilli. Serve with rice.

COOK'S TIP

Pork belly ribs are also sold as pork belly rashers or pork belly slices.

CLARISSA'S MATCHA AND WHITE CHOCOLATE BROWNIES

Preparation time 20 mins plus cooling
Cooking time 35 mins
Makes 12 pieces

- **195g unsalted butter, chopped**
- **175g white cooking chocolate, chopped**
- **1 cup caster sugar**
- **3 free-range eggs**
- **1 Tbsp vanilla extract**
- **145g plain flour**
- **2 Tbsp good-quality matcha powder, plus extra for dusting**
- **1 tsp sea salt**
- **150g white chocolate chips**
- **75g macadamia nuts, roughly chopped**

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced. Grease and line a 20cm square cake pan with baking paper.
STEP 2 Place butter and chocolate in a heatproof bowl over simmering water. Stir until smooth. Remove from heat and cool to room temperature.
STEP 3 Meanwhile, place sugar in a large bowl. Whisk in eggs, one at time, until thick and creamy. Stir in vanilla and cooled chocolate mixture.
STEP 4 Sift flour, matcha powder and salt over wet ingredients. Fold in until just combined (don't overmix). Stir in chocolate chips and nuts.
STEP 5 Pour into prepared pan and smooth top. Bake 25–30 minutes or until centre is just set and a toothpick can be removed with a few moist crumbs. Cool completely in the pan before slicing into 12 squares.

COOK'S TIPS

- Use "ceremonial grade" matcha for a bright green colour and best results.
- Sprinkle the brownies with a touch of sea salt, lightly dust with matcha powder or drizzle with white chocolate for a fancy finish. ■

Food preparation Beck Lyall

dinner for one

Delicious everyday ideas for when you're dining solo. *Photography* TIM ROBERTS *Styling* MICHELE CRANSTON

CHICKEN AND BROCCOLI CURRY

Preparation time 10 mins
Cooking time 15 mins
Serves 1

2 tsp (10g) butter
150g chicken thigh fillets, cut into 4cm pieces
½ small brown onion, thinly sliced
1 garlic clove, crushed
2 Tbsp korma curry paste
100ml coconut milk
¼ cup chicken stock
1 tomato, diced
½ head broccoli, broken into florets
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper to season
Toasted flaked almonds, steamed rice, pappadums, to serve

STEP 1 In a large saucepan, melt butter on medium heat. Cook chicken for 4–5 minutes, until browned. Remove.

STEP 2 In the same pan, cook onion and garlic for 2–3 minutes, until tender. Add curry paste and cook, stirring, for 1 minute, until fragrant.

STEP 3 Stir in coconut milk, stock and tomato. Return chicken to pan along with broccoli. Bring to the boil. Reduce heat to low. Simmer, covered, 4–5 minutes. Season.

STEP 4 Serve curry sprinkled with flaked almonds. Accompany with rice and pappadums. ■

Food preparation Mel Burge

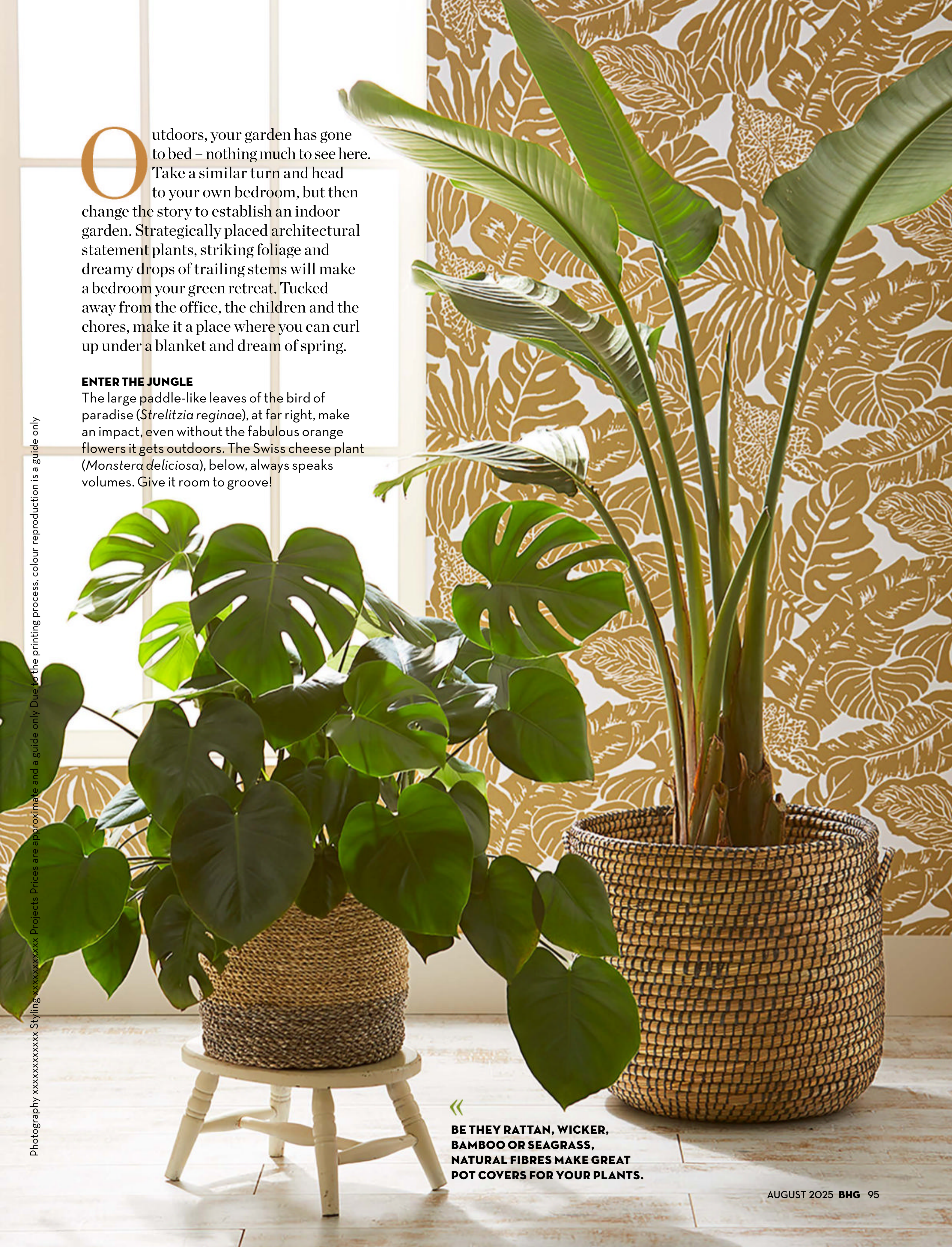
Turn to page 150 to learn about plants that help you to sleep.

FABULOUS FOLIAGE
Give your fiddle-leaf fig (*Ficus lyrata*) lots of room as in the right conditions it can grow as tall as 2 metres. The huge, glossy, yellow-veined leaves can be a dramatic focus in a room.

Grow green dreams with a bedroom *garden*

Even when you snuggle up indoors in the depths of winter, you don't need to stop gardening!

Words JENNY DILLON



Outdoors, your garden has gone to bed – nothing much to see here. Take a similar turn and head to your own bedroom, but then change the story to establish an indoor garden. Strategically placed architectural statement plants, striking foliage and dreamy drops of trailing stems will make a bedroom your green retreat. Tucked away from the office, the children and the chores, make it a place where you can curl up under a blanket and dream of spring.

ENTER THE JUNGLE
The large paddle-like leaves of the bird of paradise (*Strelitzia reginae*), at far right, make an impact, even without the fabulous orange flowers it gets outdoors. The Swiss cheese plant (*Monstera deliciosa*), below, always speaks volumes. Give it room to groove!

«

BE THEY RATTAN, WICKER, BAMBOO OR SEAGRASS, NATURAL FIBRES MAKE GREAT POT COVERS FOR YOUR PLANTS.

Photography xxxxxxxxxxxx Styling xxxxxxxxxxxx Projects Prices are approximate and a guide only Due to the printing process, colour reproduction is a guide only

LET'S HANG OUT Use your wall space and create a natural canopy with cascades of pothos (*Epipremnum* spp), heart-leaf philodendron (*Philodendron hederaceum*) and English ivy (*Hedera helix*).

Quality bedding *for your plants*

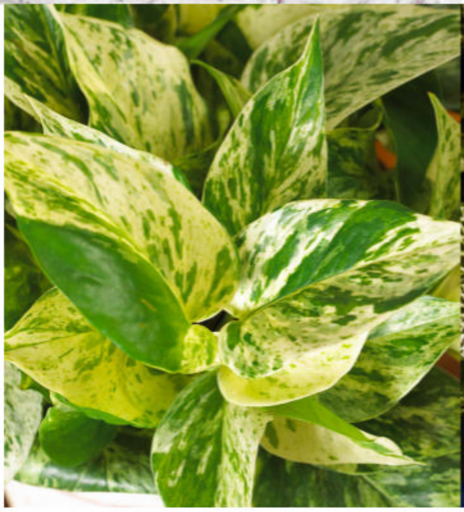
Indoor plants thrive in quality potting mix made from ingredients such as bark, peat moss, coir, perlite, vermiculite and added fertilisers. These components provide aeration, moisture, drainage and nutrients.

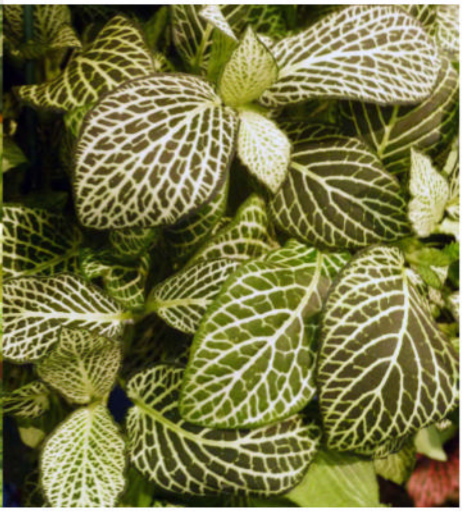
However, unlike garden soil, potting mix has little beneficial microbial activity. Over time, the structure of the mix breaks down, becoming compact and cutting off air to the plant's roots. When this happens, a plant's health declines and, without intervention, it may die.

To keep plants happy, refresh potting mix every one to two years. Spring is the best time to do this as the warmer weather encourages growth, and the job is easier done outdoors.

Make sure the potting mix suits your plant. For instance, most orchids are epiphytes, meaning they absorb moisture and nutrients from the air. They need an open, bark-based mix for support rather than sustenance. Succulents prefer a well-draining mix to avoid root rot. Many Australian natives require low-phosphorus formulations, while begonias thrive in slightly acidic conditions.

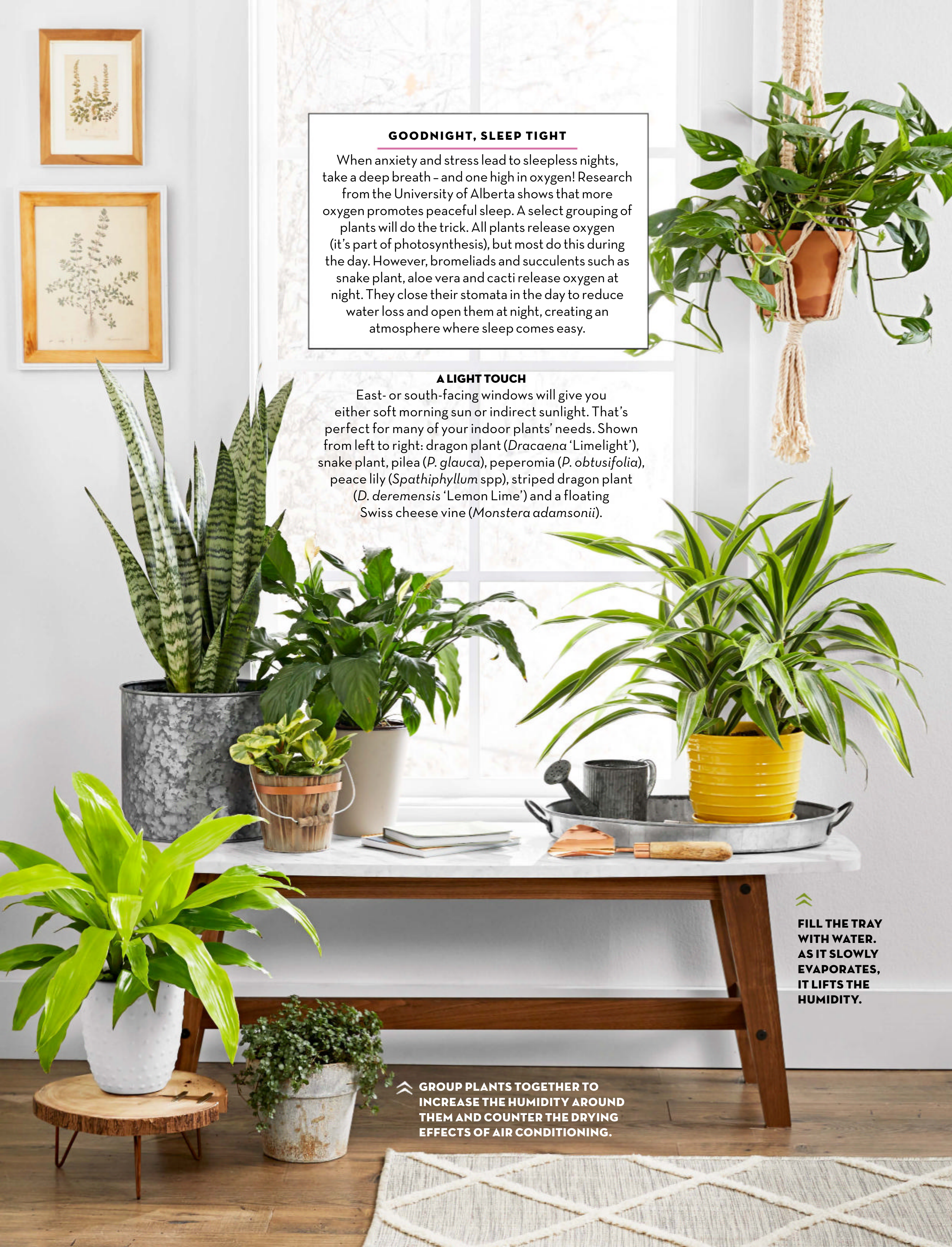
TIP Keep plant labels in an envelope or drawer so you can easily refer to them when checking on your plants' individual watering and feeding needs.





RIGHT Make a splash with golden pothos (*Epipremnum aureum*). With its apple green leaves splattered with yellow, it makes for a striking trailing plant. The bonus is it tolerates neglect.

FAR RIGHT When life gets complicated, perhaps you need a nerve plant. It's also called the mosaic plant (*Fittonia albivenis*) because of its red, pink or white vein pattern. Plant it in a wide pot as it will spread and fill out.



GOODNIGHT, SLEEP TIGHT

When anxiety and stress lead to sleepless nights, take a deep breath – and one high in oxygen! Research from the University of Alberta shows that more oxygen promotes peaceful sleep. A select grouping of plants will do the trick. All plants release oxygen (it's part of photosynthesis), but most do this during the day. However, bromeliads and succulents such as snake plant, aloe vera and cacti release oxygen at night. They close their stomata in the day to reduce water loss and open them at night, creating an atmosphere where sleep comes easy.

A LIGHT TOUCH
East- or south-facing windows will give you either soft morning sun or indirect sunlight. That's perfect for many of your indoor plants' needs. Shown from left to right: dragon plant (*Dracaena* 'Limelight'), snake plant, pilea (*P. glauca*), peperomia (*P. obtusifolia*), peace lily (*Spathiphyllum* spp), striped dragon plant (*D. deremensis* 'Lemon Lime') and a floating Swiss cheese vine (*Monstera adamsonii*).

FILL THE TRAY WITH WATER. AS IT SLOWLY EVAPORATES, IT LIFTS THE HUMIDITY.

GROUP PLANTS TOGETHER TO INCREASE THE HUMIDITY AROUND THEM AND COUNTER THE DRYING EFFECTS OF AIR CONDITIONING.

Choose the aspect *that's best for your plants*

The light in bedrooms tends to be lower than the living areas of your home, although a window is often an avenue for light. A dim corner can also be perfect for a shade-loving plant! Find out what aspect you're working with, then choose from these fabulous plants.

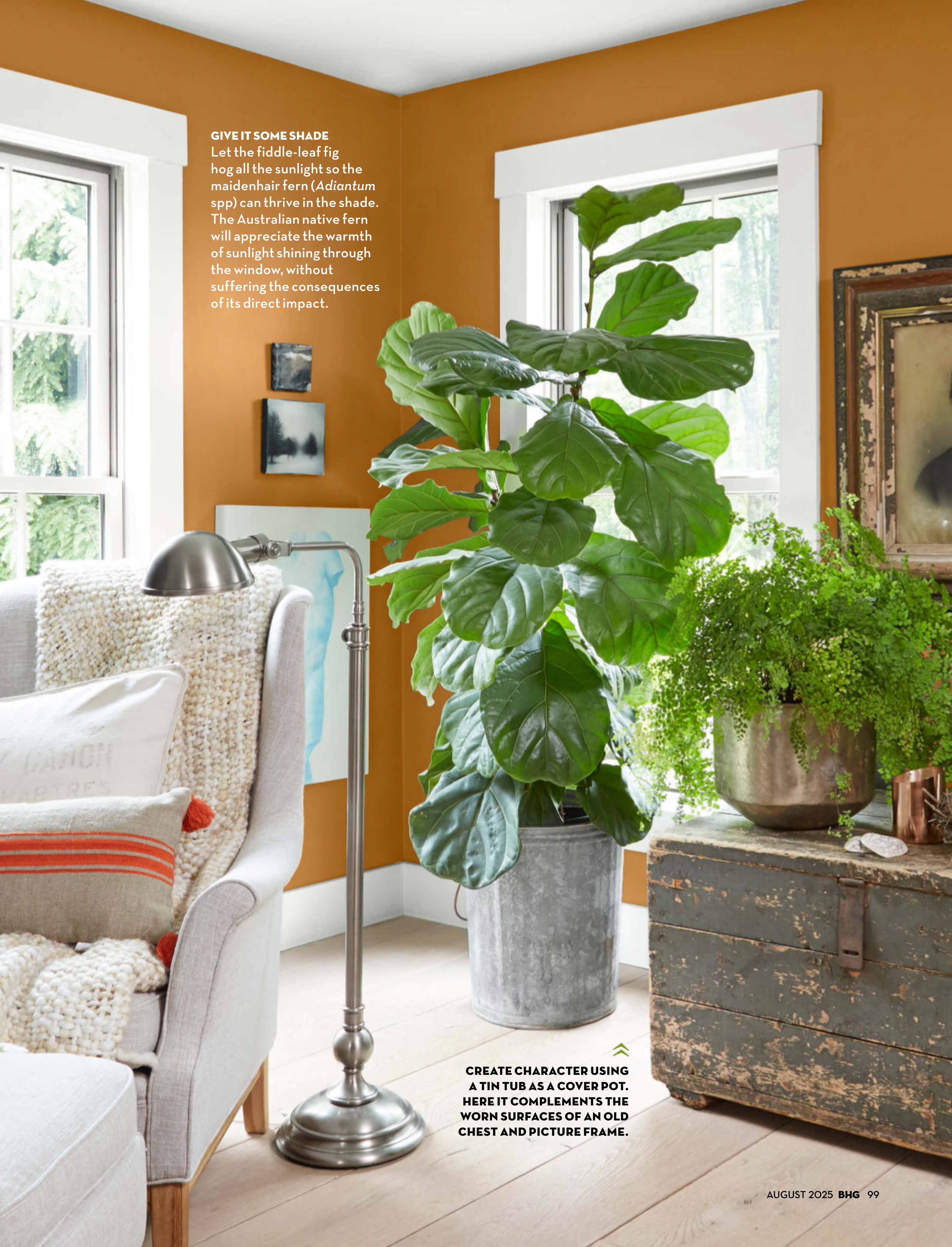
FULL SUN (NORTH ASPECT)
Fiddle-leaf fig, bird of paradise

MORNING SUN (EAST ASPECT)
Mosaic plant, croton, fatsia, striped dracaena

BRIGHT INDIRECT LIGHT (NEAR A WINDOW BUT NOT IN FRONT OF IT)
Split-leaf philodendron, parlour palm, snake plant, elephant ear

LOW LIGHT
English ivy, heart-leaf philodendron, pothos, golden pothos, peace lily, peperomia, *Dracaena fragrans* 'Limelight', pilea, Swiss cheese plant

FULL SHADE (SOUTH ASPECT)
Maidenhair fern (although it also copes with low or indirect light)



GIVE IT SOME SHADE
Let the fiddle-leaf fig hog all the sunlight so the maidenhair fern (*Adiantum* spp) can thrive in the shade. The Australian native fern will appreciate the warmth of sunlight shining through the window, without suffering the consequences of its direct impact.

CREATE CHARACTER USING A TIN TUB AS A COVER POT. HERE IT COMPLEMENTS THE WORN SURFACES OF AN OLD CHEST AND PICTURE FRAME.

Try a cover pot *for your plants*

Standard planters come with drainage holes, essential to prevent roots becoming waterlogged and rotting. Even when placed on a saucer, excess water can spill out onto floors, furniture and other surfaces, damaging them.

The elegant solution is to simply place your fabulous plants, still in their ugly nursery containers, into a cover pot that has no drainage holes, preventing water from spilling out. But be sure to empty out any excess water from the cover pot, as standing water can lead to root rot.

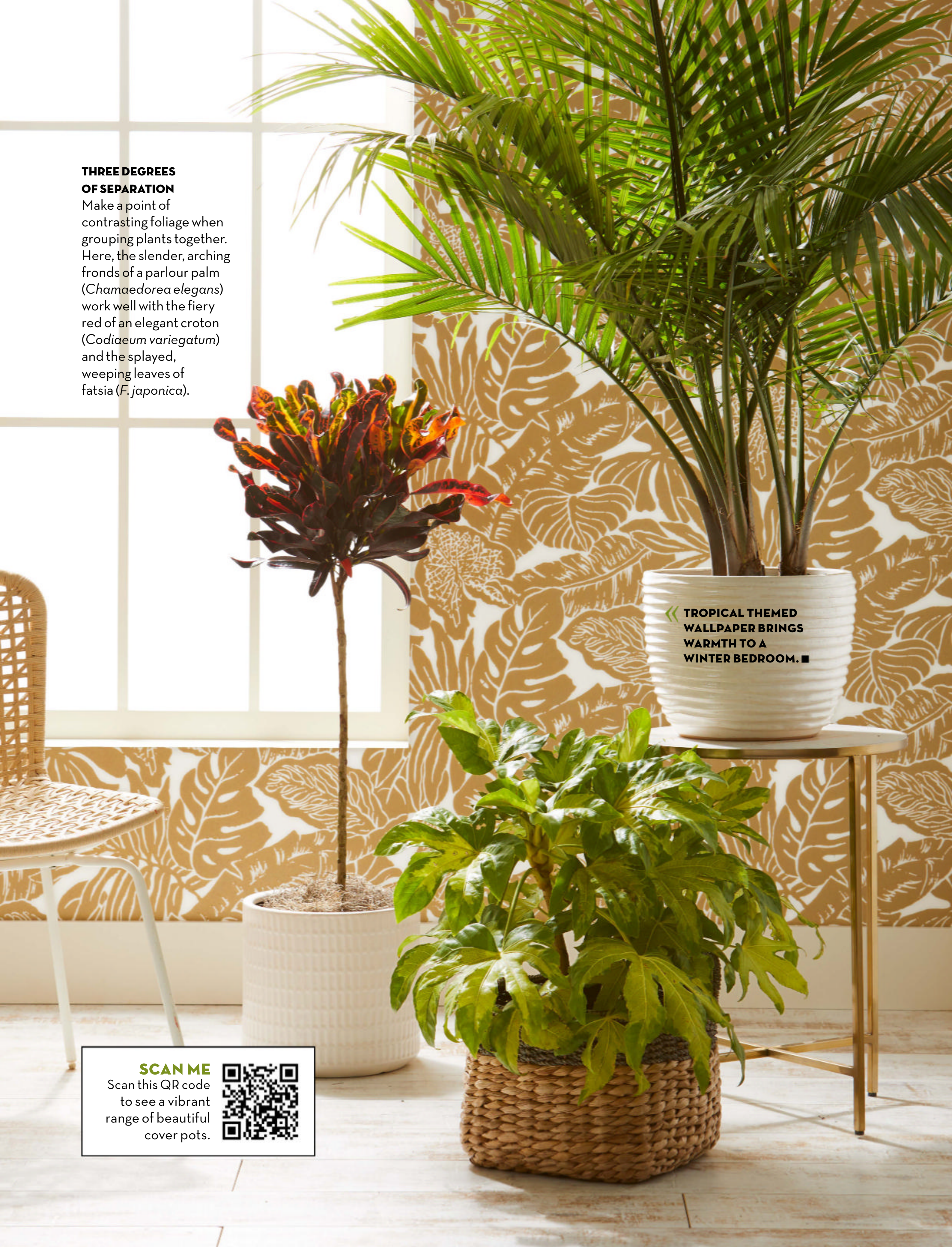
You can use different cover pots to change the look of your plants without having to put them through the trauma of repotting.

And you're not limited by the material. As with standard planters, you can get them in ceramics and plastics, but you can extend your range by using wicker or hessian (put a saucer under your inner planter to collect excess water). Or, you can even try waterproof, plastic-lined fabric!

ABOVE The big, dramatic, lance-like and colourfully veined leaves of elephant ears (in this case *Alocasia sanderiana*) can grow up to 1 metre indoors (2 metres outdoors). It's a statement plant that deserves to be appreciated in isolation because of its pure theatre.

RIGHT With their timeless elegance, moth orchids (*Phalaenopsis* spp) bring rare, long-lasting flowers to your bedroom. They can last for up to two months during winter, maybe even more if conditions are perfect. When flowers fade, cut the stems back to the lowest node so that next season the flowers will bloom again.

Photography Adobe Stock



THREE DEGREES OF SEPARATION
Make a point of contrasting foliage when grouping plants together. Here, the slender, arching fronds of a parlour palm (*Chamaedorea elegans*) work well with the fiery red of an elegant croton (*Codiaeum variegatum*) and the splayed, weeping leaves of fatsia (*F. japonica*).

TROPICAL THEMED WALLPAPER BRINGS WARMTH TO A WINTER BEDROOM. ■

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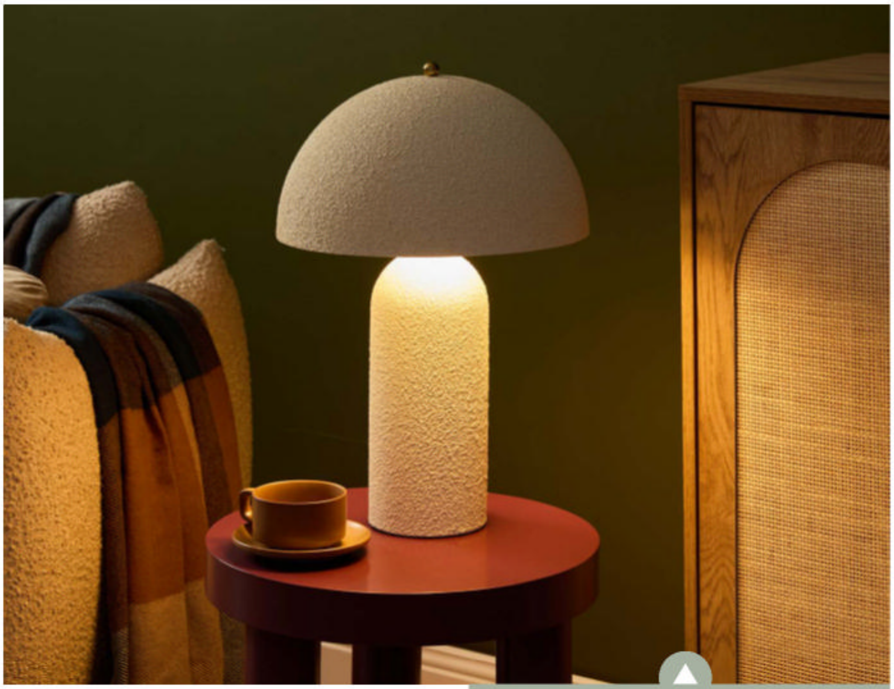


PALATE CLEANSER

Refresh your cabinet with this gorgeous 12-piece Starter stacking set in Spice. The handcrafted ceramic plates and bowls are finished with a satin exterior and handpainted rim; $255, from Our Place.

Retro glam

Get the warm glow you want in your living room or bedroom. This lamp combines a retro dome shade and pebbled texture to make an understated silhouette. What a way to elevate your space! Dome Pebble table lamp, $179.99, from Mocka.

REST EASY

Comfort is essential for a quality sleep. Using Climatex quilting and Dreamfoam cushioning, the SleepMaker Smart Rest mattress is designed to provide responsive support while you snooze. Starting from $599, it's available exclusively at Harvey Norman.

Finding comfort in TRADITION

Sheet Society and Waverley Mills, Australia's oldest working textile mill, have collaborated to make soft, durable throws that blend recycled Eden cotton sheets with Australian merino wool. Available in Midnight or Terracotta; $350, from Sheet Society.

A SCENT'S WORTH

Oil burners are a great way to infuse your home with comforting scents without too much hassle. All you need is a tea light, your favourite scented or essential oil and some water. Oil burner in beige, $99.95, from Country Road. ■

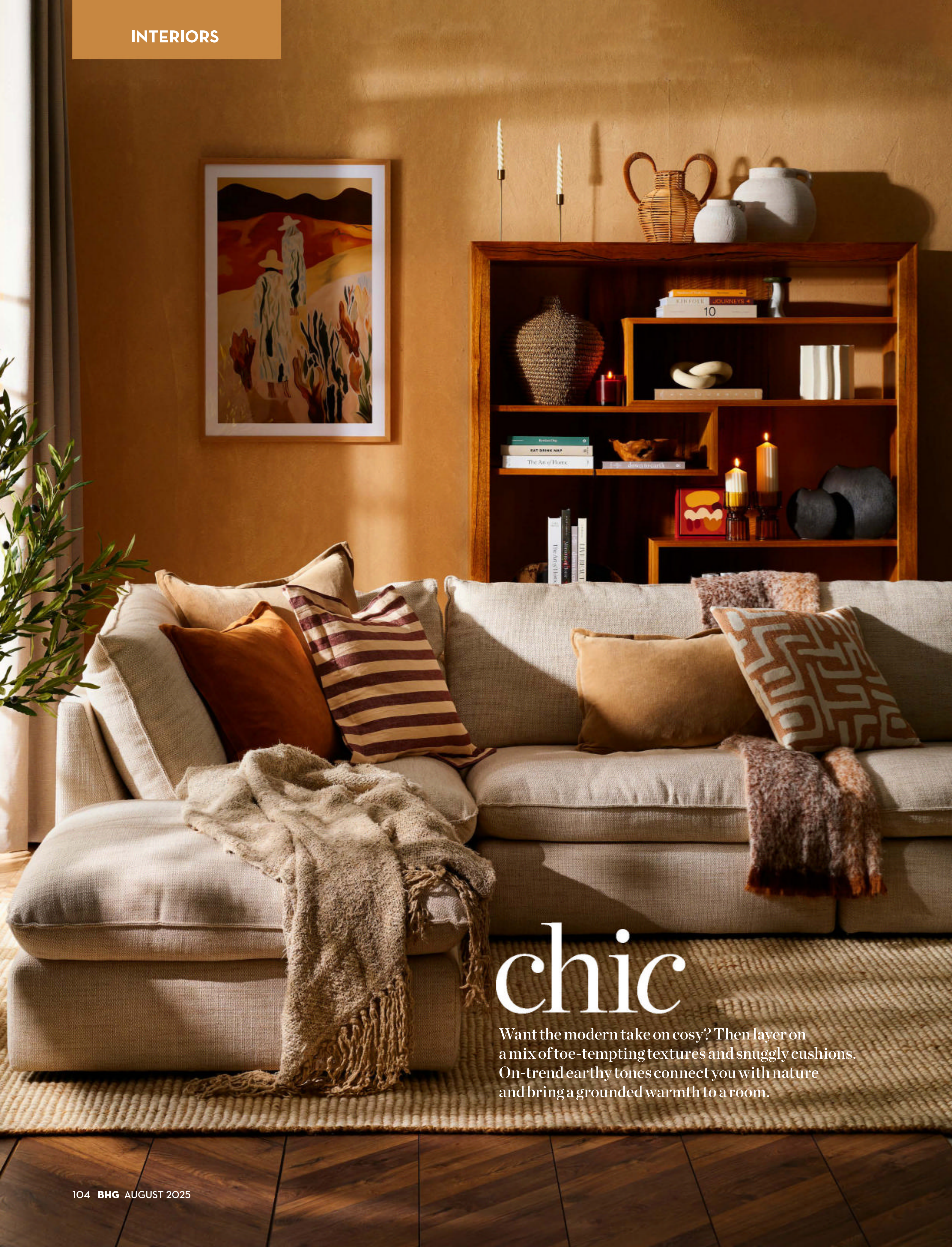
Prices are approximate and a guide only. Due to the printing process, colour reproduction is a guide only.

cosy

3 ways to create a COSY NOOK

Feeling cosy is emotional as well as physical, and there's more than one way to make a home warm and inviting. These three styling approaches will leave you snug as a bug and ready for hot buttered toast with honey.

Photography JP URIZAR *Styling* NONCI NYONI


KINFOLK
JOURNEYS
10
EAT DRINK NAP
The Art of Home
down to earth

chic

Want the modern take on cosy? Then layer on a mix of toe-tempting textures and snuggly cushions. On-trend earthy tones connect you with nature and bring a grounded warmth to a room.

TOP STYLING TIPS

1. Get earthy

Colour walls in earthy shades of terracotta, soft mustard or mellow brown to enjoy a calming, cosy space the whole year through.

2. Add warm timber

Timbers in finishes from light honey to rich brown add a beautiful glow. Avoid white or almost black tones, as these feel cooler.

3. Pile up comfort

Think layers and clusters: layers of throws and cushions, and clusters of books, vases and candles. These immediately give the room a fuller, more homey look.

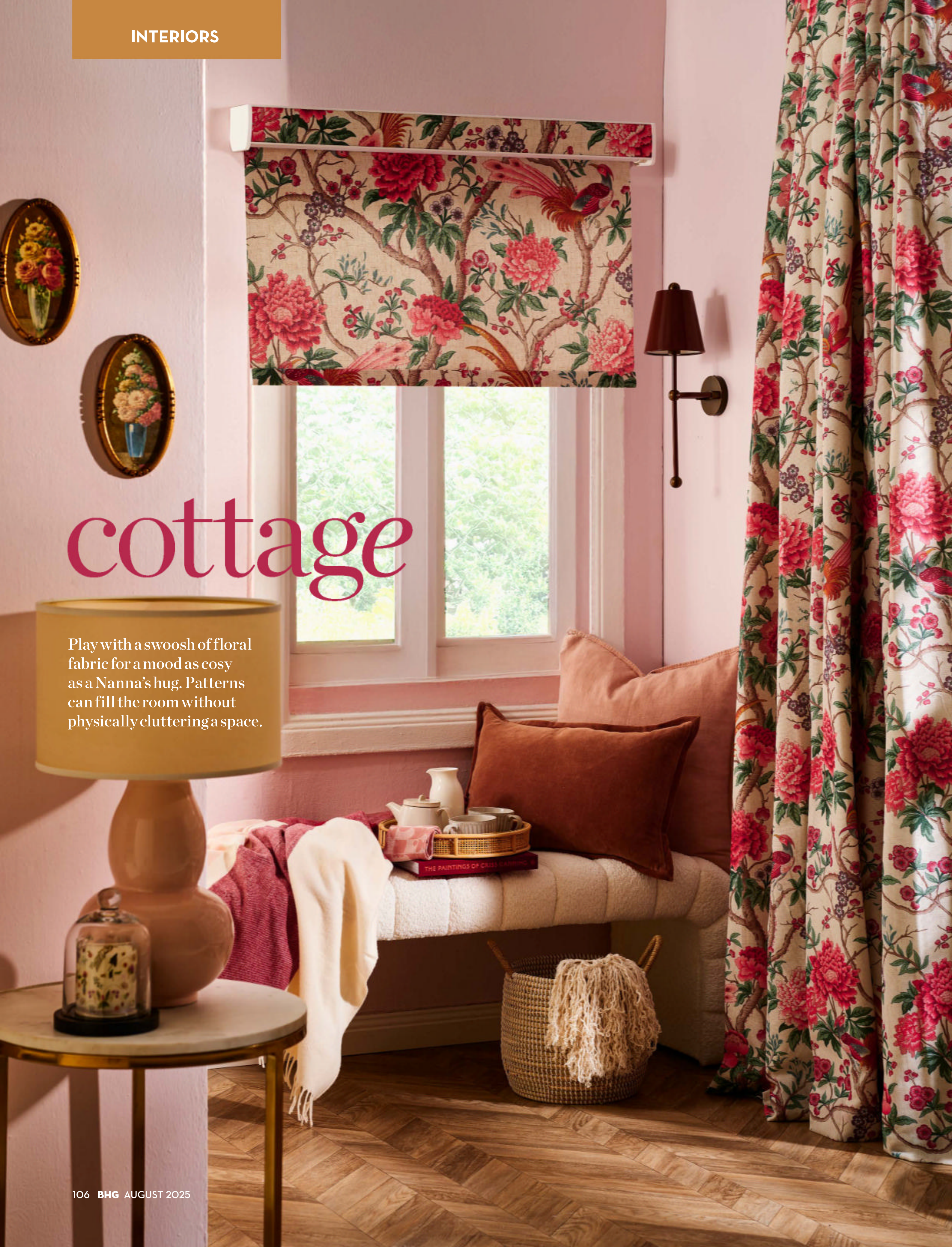
4. Tip on the texture

Choose woven elements to add visual interest and tactile warmth. Fluffy throws can be pulled up under your chin and provide contrast with more robust textures from woven rugs and rattan pieces.

KINFOLK
Resident Dog
EAT DRINK NAP
The Art of Home
down to earth

OPPOSITE Sorrento **modular sofa and ottoman**, from $4399, Freedom. On sofa, Wabi **throw**, $399.95, and Evelyn plain **velvet cushions**, from $79.95 each, Eadie Lifestyle; Frankie **stripe cushion**, $69.95, and Kiona **cushion**, $49.95, Pillow Talk; Sunday **throw** in Mocha, $399, Waverley Mills. Mosman **bookshelf**, $2399, Freedom. On its top, Wyndham **candle holder**, $39.95, Freedom, with Studio Billie **candles**, $8 each; Kai **rattan vase**, $59.95, and Circolo **vases**, $19.95 and $69.95, Pillow Talk. On top shelves (also above), Ligure **urn**, from $149, Freedom; **aromatherapy candle**, $49, The Grampians Goods Co; THEO **chain link**, $89.95, Freedom; Mushroom **marble candle holder**, $139, Black Blaze; Solace Star **vase**, from $19.95, Pillow Talk. On middle shelves, Surabaya **bowl** (also above), from $69.95, Freedom; Xander Holliday mini **artwork**, stylist's own; Krelle **candle holders** in Amber, $12.95 each, Freedom, with Studio Billie August & Theodore **candles**, from $80; and Bering **vessels**, from $69.95 each, Freedom. On bottom shelf (just seen), Launceston **bookends**, $59.95, Freedom. On floor, Orissa **floor rug**, from $699, and **faux olive tree**, from $269, Freedom. Framed **print**, $299.95, Olive et Oriel. **Walls** painted in Bauwerk Colour Limewash in Barley, $49.50/1 litre.

Prices are approximate and a guide only.



cottage

Play with a swoosh of floral fabric for a mood as cosy as a Nanna's hug. Patterns can fill the room without physically cluttering a space.

TOP STYLING TIPS

1. Keep in the heat

Use heavy lined curtains to retain heat in your room and create a sense of intimacy. A bold floral or check fabric in warm colours is pure cottagecore.

2. Use lots of little lights

With heavy drapes blocking the outside light, you can compose your own indoor illumination with a mix of wall and table lights and candles.

3. Balance light and dark

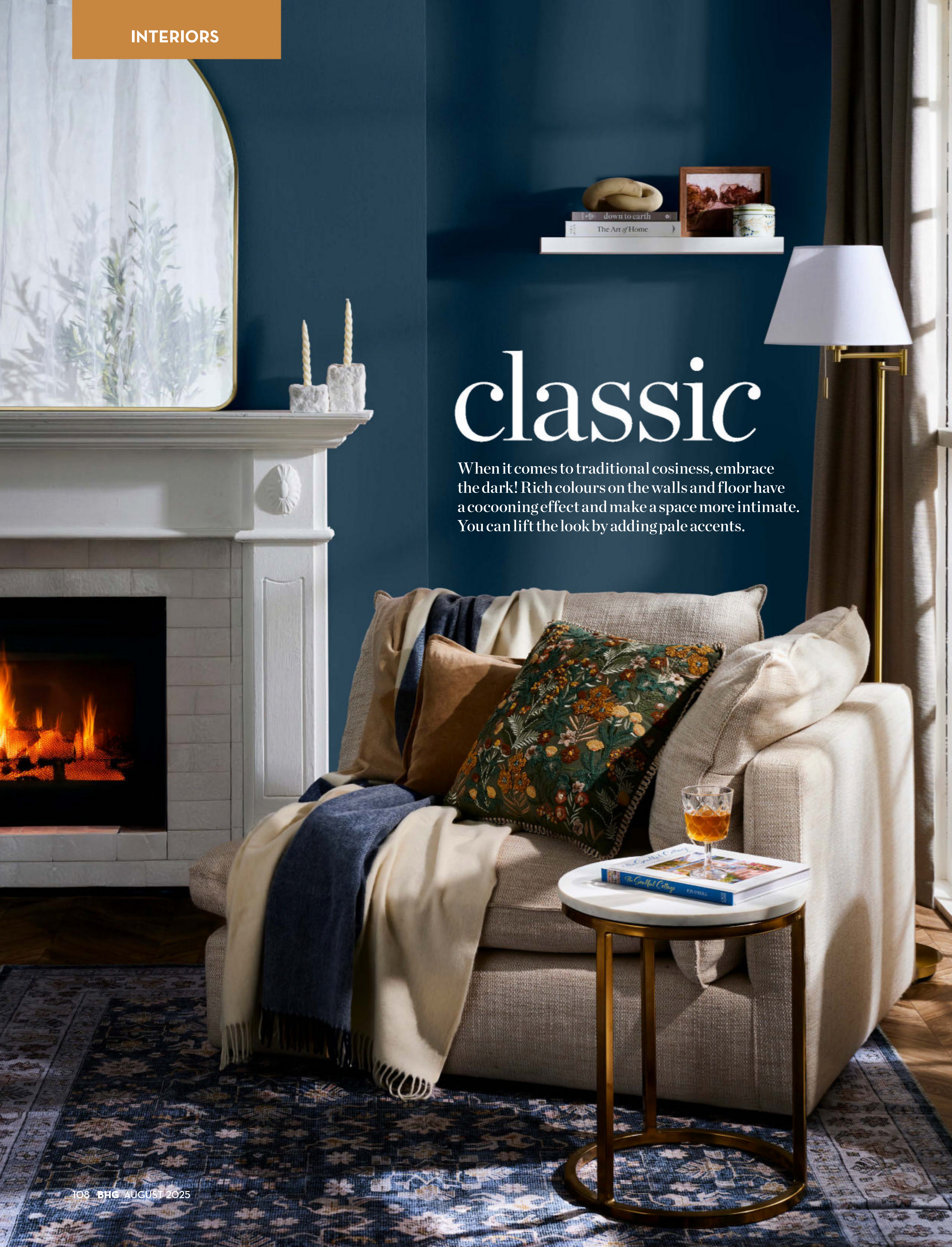
Balance lighter coloured walls with accent pieces in bolder, darker tones. In this scheme, the dark-hued wall light and velvet cushions in rich browns add visual weight.

4. Have a darker base

Deeper toned timber floors are the perfect base for creating a snug and cosy effect.

OPPOSITE Liberty Elysian Paradise in Fuchsia **roller blind**, from $118, and S-fold **curtain** with thermal interlining, from $137, Tuiss Blinds Online. On wall, Petite **Sconce** in Manor Red and Aged Brass, $610 (ex GST), Bloomingdales Lighting; and vintage French watercolour **floral still-lifes**, $220 each, Vintage Art Emporium. Lennix **fabric bench**, $799 (for 170cm), Freedom. On bench, Double Crossed **throw** in Burgundy, $399, Waverley Mills; Evelyn **velvet cushion** in Nutmeg (also right), from $79.95, and Luca **linen cushion** in Clay, from $109.95, Eadie Lifestyle. Tray on bench and tea set (also above), stylist's own; *The Paintings of Criss Canning* **book**, $129.99, Kinokuniya. Under bench, Collers **basket**, from $69.95, Freedom; Wabi **linen throw** in Ivory, $399.95, Eadie Lifestyle. Siena nested **table** with Indian marble top, $999 for a set of two (only larger size shown), Freedom. On table, Gourd **small table lamp**, $365 (ex GST), Bloomingdales Lighting; Laboratoire **glass cloche**, from $39.95, Freedom; Cashmere & Nectarine limited edition **candle**, $59.95 (380g), Glasshouse Fragrances. **Walls** painted in a custom colour mix of Dulux Wash&Wear Low Sheen in Henna Red, $121.50/4 litres, and Dulux Wash&Wear Lexicon Quarter, $102.95/4 litres.

Prices are approximate and a guide only.


down to earth
The Art of Home

classic

When it comes to traditional cosiness, embrace the dark! Rich colours on the walls and floor have a cocooning effect and make a space more intimate. You can lift the look by adding pale accents.

TOP STYLING TIPS

1. Choose deeper hues
A darker wall colour is rich, dramatic and more enveloping. The effect is to make a room feel cosier and more compact.

2. Make a nest
You can easily create an inviting corner by arranging a mix of cushions and a warm throw on a textured fabric chair.

3. Get the lights right
Natural sunlight and a fireside glow will immediately warm a cosy corner, but you'll also need ambient and task lighting to really make it an appealing spot to stay.

4. Put out a pattern
Add immediate warmth and opulence to a room with a dark patterned rug. Its decorative design brings visual appeal, while the rug itself helps to insulate the space.

The Soulful Cottage
CREATING A CHARMING AND PERSONAL HOME
FIFI O'NEILL

OPPOSITE On mantel, Hubert 100cm arched **mirror**, $279, Freedom; Mitta marble **tealight holders**, from $29.95 each, Freedom, with Studio Billie Ziggy taper **candles**, $8 each. On shelf, THEO stone **chain link**, $89.95, Freedom; artwork, stylist's own; Gracie Vine **jar**, $24.95, Pillow Talk. Sorrento modular **sofa and ottoman**, from $4399, from Freedom (corner piece shown). On sofa, Double Crossed **throw** in Eclipse, $399, Waverley Mills; Evelyn plain **velvet cushion** in Natural (also above), $99.95 (40cm x 60cm), Eadie Lifestyle; Camilla **embroidered floral cushion**, $49.95, Pillow Talk. Siena nested **table** (also left), $999 for a set of two (only smaller size shown), Freedom. On table, *The Soulful Cottage* by Fifi O'Neill, $56.88, Amazon; glass, stylist's own. Eltham **floor lamp**, $249, Freedom. LAV washable **floor rug** in Blue, from $249, Freedom. S-fold **curtain** in Cavendish fabric in Warm Stone, from $110, Tuiss Blinds Online. **Walls** painted in Dulux Wash&Wear Low Sheen in Baltic, $121.50/4 litres. ■

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Scan this QR code to shop these items in our classic, chic and cottage looks.

Prices are approximate and a guide only.

StarGAZER

Build a large star from the centre out for a colourful wall-hanging.

Photography CARSON DOWNING *Quilt design* LEILA GARDUNIA

Gather your fabrics

For accuracy, use inches in this original design. The finished quilt measures 36½ inches (93cm) square. Yardages are for 42-inch (112cm) fabric width.

- **Assorted light green prints** (*quilt centre*) 4½inches (12cm) in total
- **Assorted green prints** (*quilt centre*) 9 inches (25cm) in total
- **Assorted white prints** (*quilt centre, inner and middle borders*) 31½ inches (80cm) total
- **Assorted fuchsia prints** (*inner border*) 4½ inches (12cm) total
- **Assorted pink prints** (*middle border*) 18 inches (46cm) in total
- **Assorted mint green prints** (*outer border*) 18 inches (46cm) in total
- **Assorted turquoise prints** (*outer border*) 4½ inches (12cm) total
- **Light pink print** (*binding*) 13½ inches (35cm) in total
- **Backing fabric** 45 x 45 inch (115 x 115cm) square
- **Wadding** 45 x 45 inch (115 x 115cm) square.

You'll also need

Tracing paper; cutting mat and rotary cutter; quilting ruler; triangle ruler; pins; sewing and quilting threads; sewing machine; iron and board; pencil; foundation piecing paper.

Cut your fabrics

From light greens, cut:

- Four 3⅞ inch (9.8cm) squares

From green prints, cut:

- One 7¼ inch (18.5cm) square
- Four 3½ inch (8.9cm) squares

From white prints, cut:

- Four 7½ inch (19cm) squares
- One 7¼ inch (18.5cm) square
- Four 6⅞ inch (17.5cm) squares
- Five 6½ inch (16.5cm) squares
- Four 3⅞ inch (9.8cm) squares
- Four 3½ inch (8.9cm) squares

From fuchsia prints, cut:

- Eight 3⅞ inch (9.8cm) squares

From pink prints, cut:

- Four 6⅞ inch (17.5cm) squares
- Eight 4½ x 8½ inch (11.5 x 21.6cm) rectangles

From mint greens, cut:

- Four 3½ x 30½ inch (8.9 x 77.5cm) outer border strips

From turquoises, cut:

- Four 3½ inch (8.9cm) squares

From light pinks, cut:

- Four 2½ x 42 inch (6.4 x 107cm) binding strips.

ASSEMBLE QUILT CENTRE

Measurements include ¼ inch (0.5cm) seam allowances. Sew with right sides together unless otherwise stated.

Press seams in directions indicated by arrows on diagrams. If no direction is specified, press the seam towards the darker fabric.

STEP 1 Use a pencil to mark a diagonal line on the wrong side of each of the assorted light green print 3⅞ inch squares.

STEP 2 Referring to **Diagram 1**, align two marked light green print squares on the diagonally opposite corners of a green print 7¼ inch square. Sew a scant ¼ inch from drawn lines on both sides of lines. Cut apart on drawn lines to make two triangle units **(Diagram 2)**. Press the triangle units open.

STEP 3 Referring to **Diagram 3**, align a marked light green print square with the green print corner of a triangle unit. Sew a scant ¼ inch from each side of the drawn line. Cut apart on drawn line **(Diagram 4)**. Press light green print triangles open to make two green Flying Geese units. Each unit should be 3½ x 6½ inches including seam allowances. Repeat with remaining triangle unit and marked light green print square to make two additional green Flying Geese units.

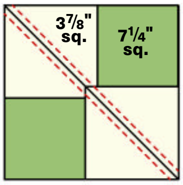


DIAGRAM 1

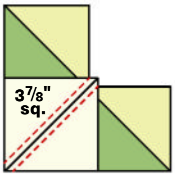


DIAGRAM 3

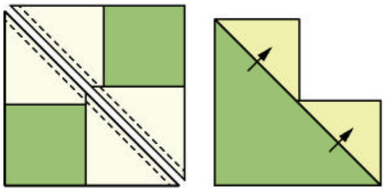


DIAGRAM 2

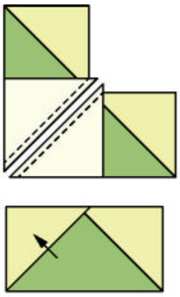
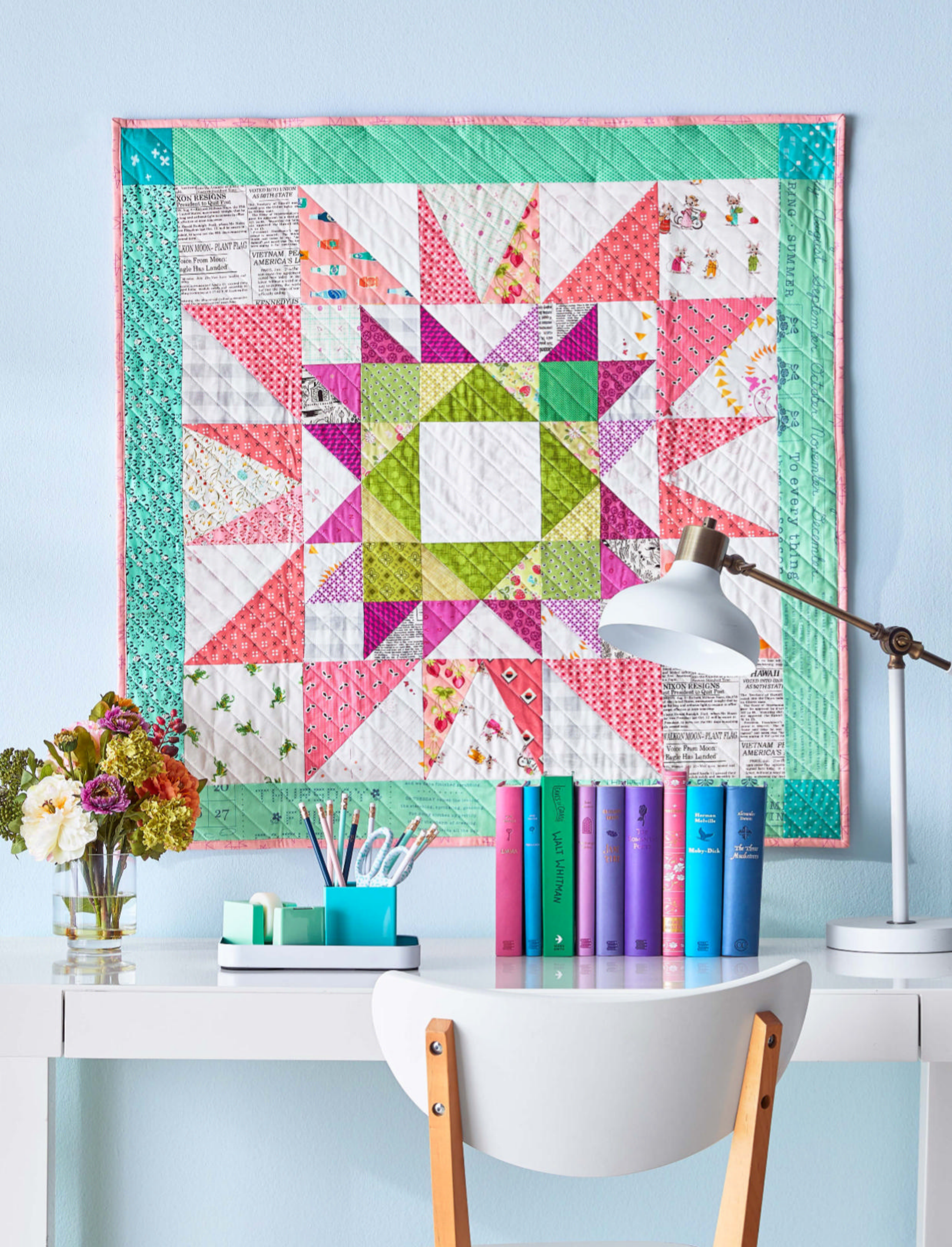


DIAGRAM 4


NIXON RESIGNS
WALKON MOON– PLANT FLAG
Voice From Moon:
Eagle Has Landed
VIETNAM PEACE
AMERICA'S
HAWAII
WALT WHITMAN
Moby-Dick
The Three Musketeers

STEP 4 Referring to **Diagram 5**, lay out assorted green print 3½ inch squares, green Flying Geese units, and one white print 6½ inch square in three rows. Sew together pieces in rows. Join rows to make quilt centre. The quilt centre should be 12½ inch square including seam allowances.

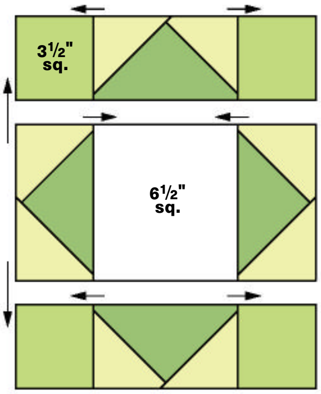
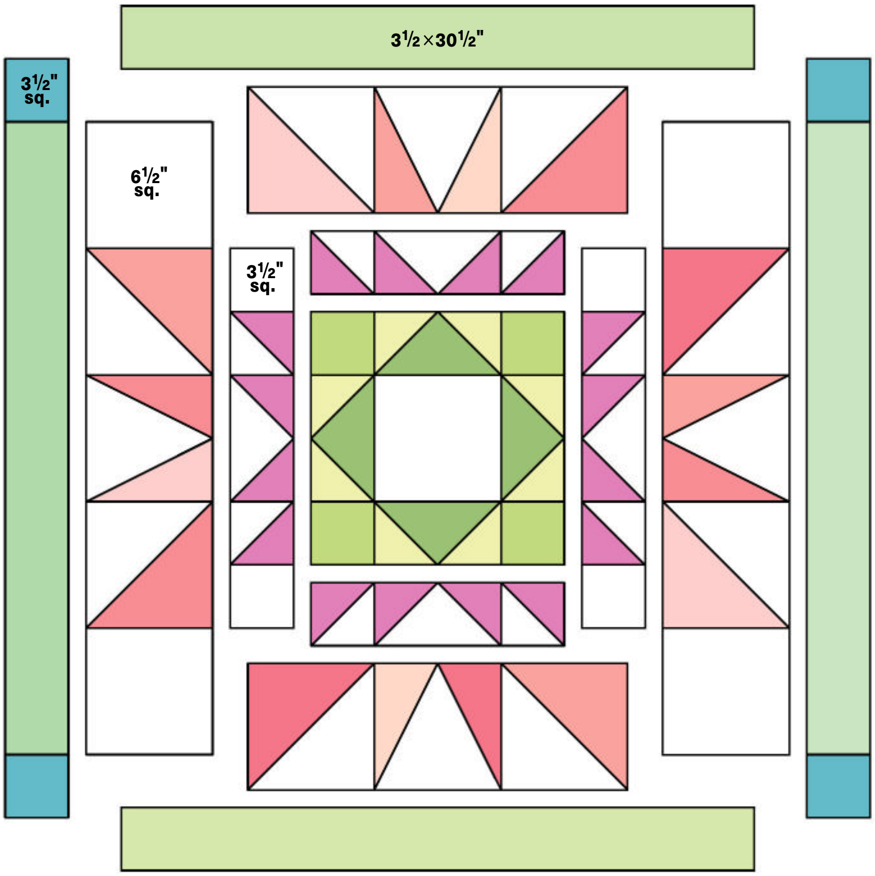


DIAGRAM 5



QUILT ASSEMBLY DIAGRAM

ASSEMBLE AND ADD INNER BORDER

STEP 1 Mark a diagonal line on the wrong side of each assorted fuchsia print 3⅞ inch square.

STEP 2 Layer a marked fuchsia print square atop a white print 3⅞ inch square. Sew together with two seams, stitching ¼ inch on each side of the marked line **(Diagram 6)**. Cut apart on marked line. Press open to make two fuchsia triangle-squares. Each should be a 3½ inch square including seam allowances. Repeat to make eight fuchsia triangle-squares in total.

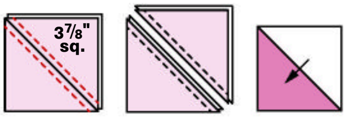


DIAGRAM 6

STEP 3 Using the remaining marked fuchsia print squares and white print 7¼ inch square, make four fuchsia Flying Geese units **(Diagram 7)** by repeating Assemble Quilt Centre steps 2 and 3 (see p110).

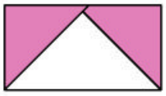


DIAGRAM 7

STEP 4 Sew together two fuchsia triangle-squares and a fuchsia Flying Geese unit to make a short inner border strip **(Quilt Assembly Diagram)**. Press seams toward Flying Geese unit. The strip should be 3½ x 12½ inches including seam allowances. Repeat to make a second short inner border strip.

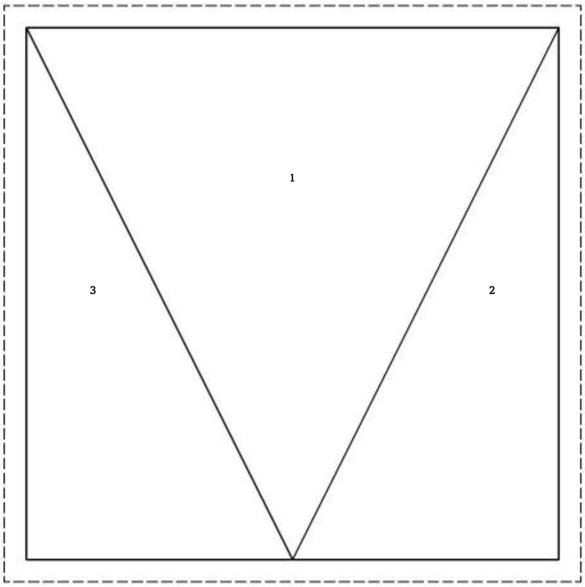
STEP 5 Sew together two assorted white print 3½ inch squares, two fuchsia triangle-squares, and one fuchsia Flying Geese unit to make a long inner border strip **(Quilt Assembly Diagram)**. Press seams toward Flying Geese unit. The strip should be 3½ x 18½ inches including seam allowances. Repeat to make a second long inner border strip.

STEP 6 Sew short inner border strips to opposite edges of quilt centre. Add long inner border strips to remaining edges. Press seams towards inner border. The quilt centre now should be 18½ inch square including seam allowances.

ASSEMBLE AND ADD MIDDLE BORDER

See the **Star Point Foundation Pattern** (top right). To foundation-piece, you will stitch fabric pieces to a foundation paper with the marked side of the paper facing up and fabric pieces layered underneath. The resulting pieced unit will be a mirror image of the foundation paper. (You can search for 'foundation piecing tutorials' online if you've never done this before.)

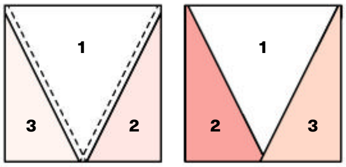
STEP 1 Use a pencil to trace the Star Point Foundation Pattern four times onto lightweight tracing paper (or other foundation material of your choice), tracing all the lines and numbers.



STAR POINT FOUNDATION PATTERN

STEP 2 Cut out each traced foundation pattern roughly ¼ inch outside the dashed lines to make four star point foundation papers.

STEP 3 Gather one star point foundation paper, one white print 7½ inch square (position 1) and two assorted pink print 4½ x 8½ inch rectangles (positions 2 and 3). Working in numerical order, foundation-piece a star point unit **(Diagram 8)**. Carefully remove the foundation paper. The unit should be 6½ inch square including seam allowances. Repeat to make four star point units in total.



Wrong side Right side

DIAGRAM 8

STEP 4 Mark a diagonal line on the wrong side of each assorted white print 6⅞ inch square.

STEP 5 Referring to Assemble and Add Inner Border step 2, use marked white print squares and assorted pink print 6⅞ inch squares to make eight pink triangle-squares **(Diagram 9)**. Each should be 6½ inch square including seam allowances.

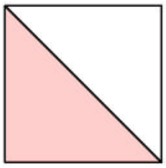


DIAGRAM 9

STEP 6 Sew together two pink triangle-squares and a star point unit to make a short middle border strip **(Quilt Assembly Diagram)**. Press seams toward triangle-squares. The strip should be 6½ x 18½ inches including seam allowances. Repeat to make a second short middle border strip.

STEP 7 Sew together two assorted white print 6½ inch squares, two pink triangle-squares, and a star point unit to make a long middle border strip **(Quilt Assembly Diagram)**. Press seams toward triangle-squares. The strip should be 6½ x 30½ inches including seam allowances. Repeat to make a second long middle border strip.

STEP 8 Sew the short middle border strips to opposite edges of the quilt centre. Add the long middle border strips to remaining edges. Press seams towards the middle border. The quilt centre now should be 30½ inches square including seam allowances.

ADD OUTER BORDER

STEP 1 Sew two of the mint green 3½ x 30½ inch outer border strips to opposite edges of the quilt centre. Press seams towards the outer border.

STEP 2 Join the turquoise print 3½ inch squares to ends of the two remaining mint green strips to make two pieced outer border strips **(Quilt Assembly Diagram)**. Press seams toward squares. Sew pieced outer border strips to remaining edges of quilt centre. Press seams towards the outer border.

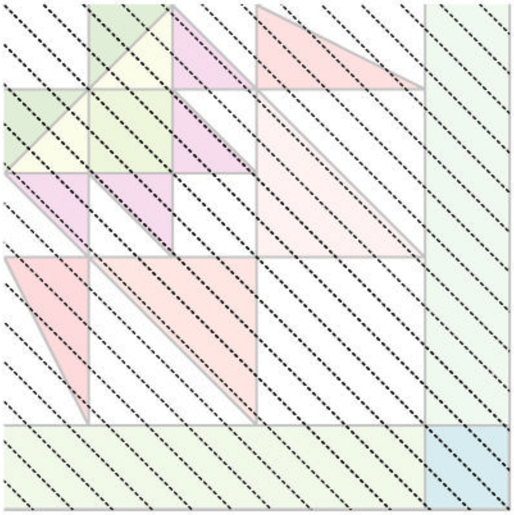
FINISH QUILT

Note: You can search for tutorials online if you have never assembled a quilt before.

STEP 1 Layer the backing fabric, wadding and quilt top on a clean flat surface. Pin, then baste all the layers together.

STEP 2 Quilt as desired. Designer Leila Gardunia machine-quilted parallel lines across the quilt top. See the **Quilting Diagram** shown below.

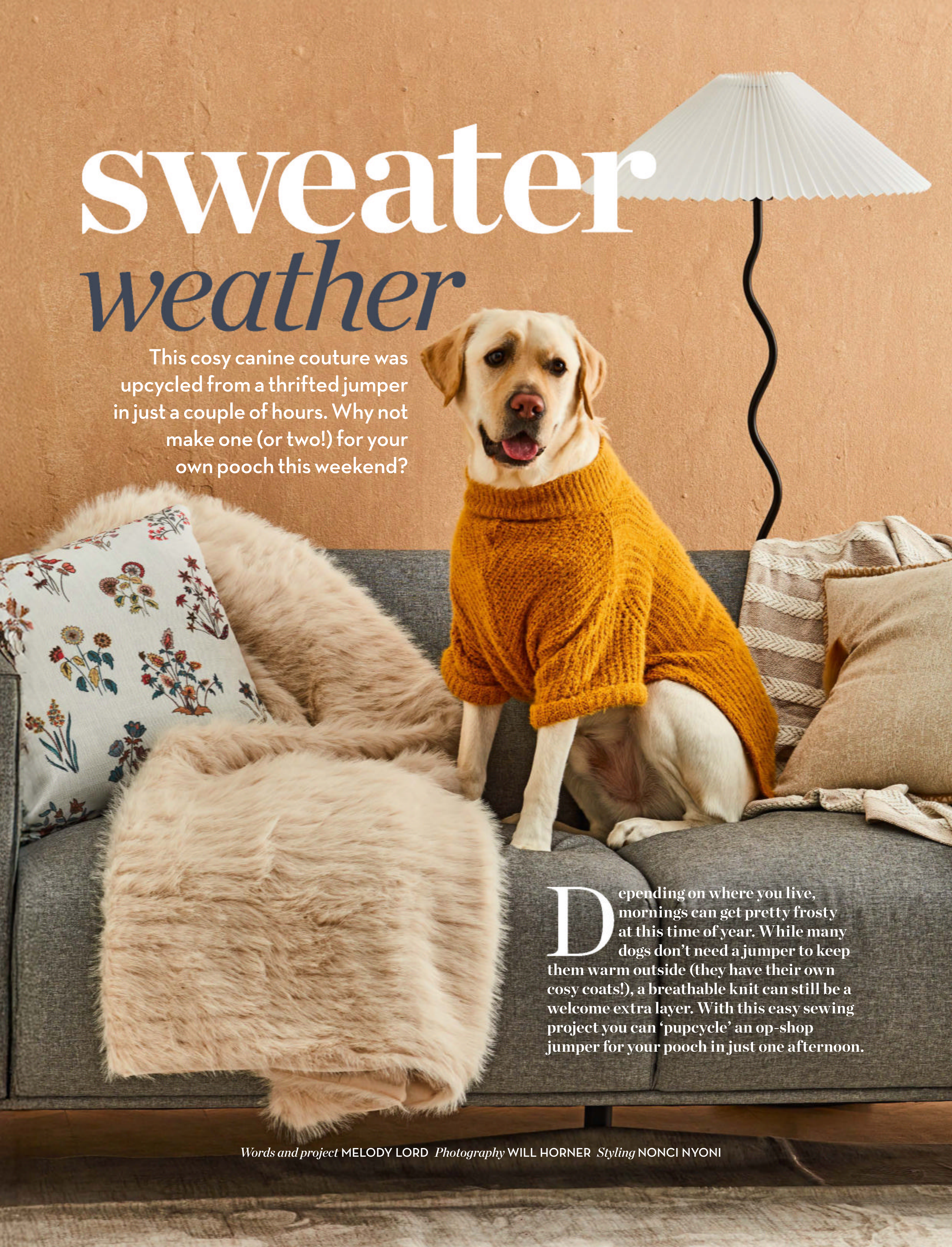
STEP 3 Trim the edges of the quilt. Cut the light pink print binding fabric into 2¼ inch strips across the width of the fabric. Join them using diagonal seams to make one long strip. Fold the strip in half lengthways with the wrong sides together and press. Align the raw edges of the binding with the quilt's edge, then pin, baste and sew the lining in place, mitring the corners as you go. Fold the binding over to the quilt's back and hand stitch the folded edge to the stitches on the back of the quilt. ■



QUILTING DIAGRAM

sweater *weather*

This cosy canine couture was upcycled from a thrifted jumper in just a couple of hours. Why not make one (or two!) for your own pooch this weekend?



Depending on where you live, mornings can get pretty frosty at this time of year. While many dogs don't need a jumper to keep them warm outside (they have their own cosy coats!), a breathable knit can still be a welcome extra layer. With this easy sewing project you can 'pupcycle' an op-shop jumper for your pooch in just one afternoon.

Words and project MELODY LORD *Photography* WILL HORNER *Styling* NONCI NYONI

EASY STEPS TO UPCYCLE A DOG JUMPER

Gather your supplies

Knitted or stretchy jumper from an op shop: adult size for a large dog, child size for a small dog.

You'll also need

Tape measure; scissors pins; sewing thread to match the jumper; sewing machine or overlocker; paper, pen and ruler (optional).

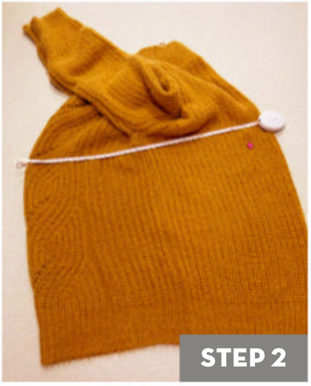
Here's how

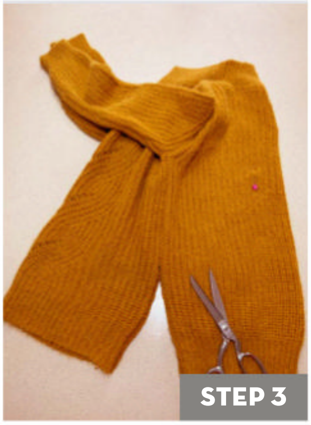
STEP 1 Measure your dog around the widest part of its chest, behind the front legs. Measure the length from the back of the neck to the dog's hips (the length you want the finished jumper to be on the dog's back). We used the full length of the jumper, but if your dog's body is shorter, cut off the bottom of the jumper at the desired length.

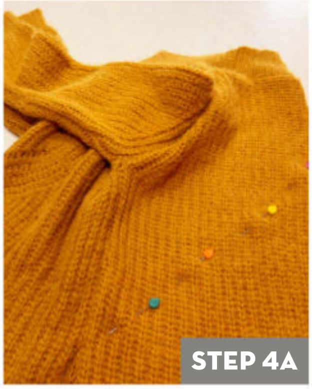
STEP 2 Fold the jumper at the centre front and back and lay it flat on a work surface. Fold the sleeves up and out of the way. Just below the armholes and starting from the centre front or back, measure half the dog's chest measurement and add about 2cm for a seam allowance. Mark it with a pin.

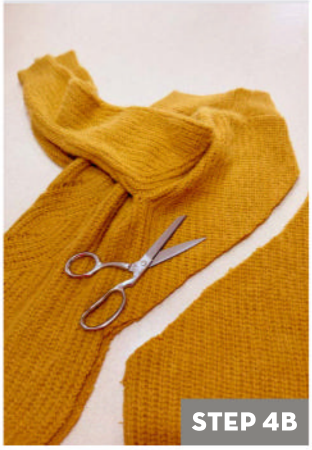
STEP 3 Open up about half of the side seams from the bottom edge of the jumper.

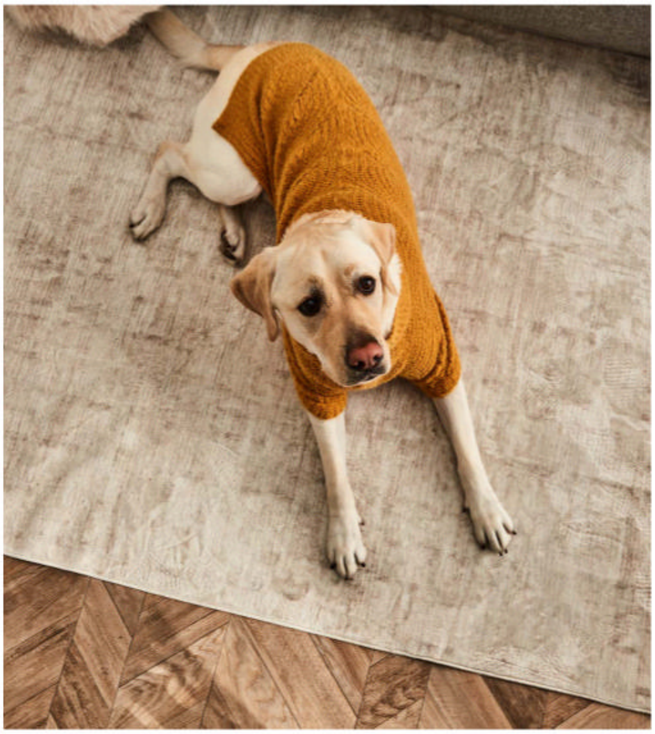
STEP 4 Pin a line from the open side seam through the pin mark and up to just below the neckline of the jumper. Cut away the excess.


STEP 2


STEP 3


STEP 4A

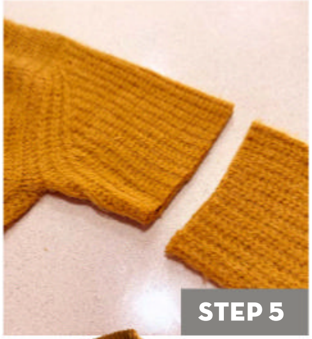

STEP 4B



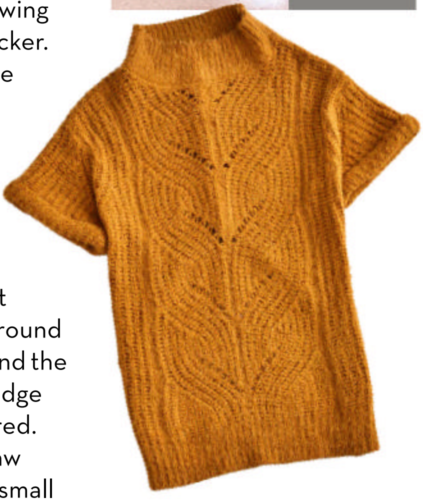
STEP 5 Cut off the sleeves to the desired length, adding a couple of centimetres for a hem or to finish the cut edges.

STEP 6 Turn the jumper inside out and pin and sew the front edges together using a 2cm seam. You can sew the seams by hand, or using a sewing machine or an overlocker. You'll need to stop the centre front seam a short distance (about 10cm) from the side seams of the jumper (pink pin).

STEP 7 Finish the cut edges of the fabric, around the tummy opening and the sleeves and bottom edge (if necessary) as desired. We overlocked the raw edges, then turned a small hem and used a blanket stitch around the edge. We also turned up a rolled cuff on the sleeves and slip-stitched it in place.

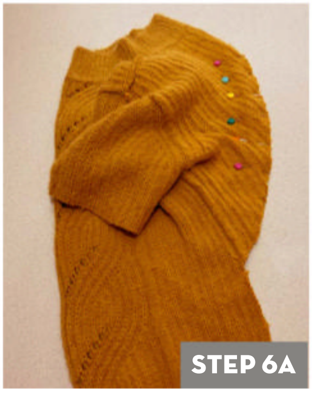


STEP 5

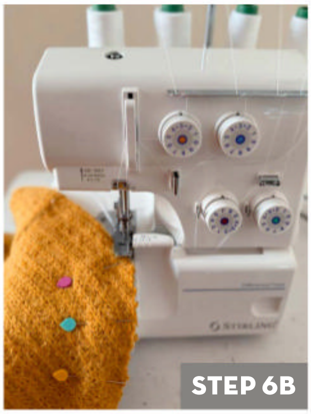


TOP VIEW

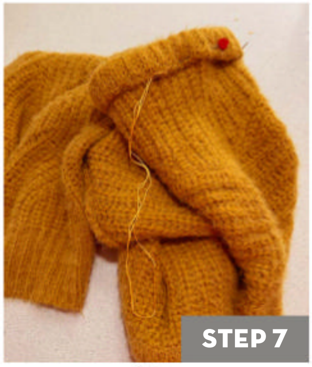
FOR SHOPPING DETAILS, SEE OUR STOCKISTS ON P187.



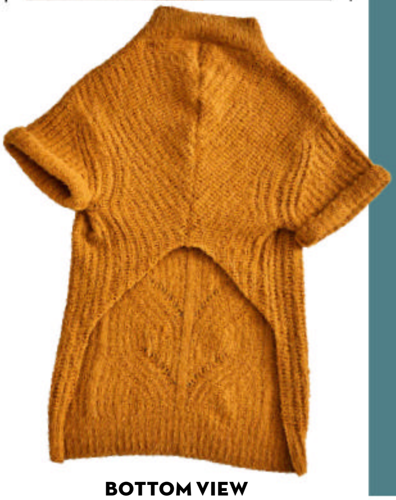
STEP 6A



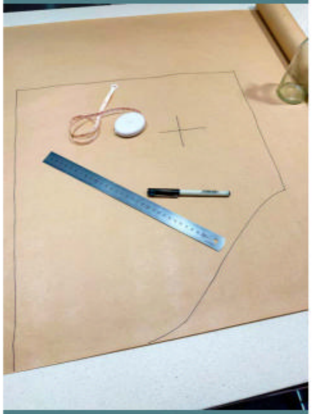
STEP 6B



STEP 7



BOTTOM VIEW



FOR SMALLER DOGS

If you want to cut down an adult-size jumper for a smaller dog, you can make a paper pattern like the one shown in the photograph using your dog's chest measurement (halve it and add a seam allowance) and back length. Try it up against your dog and mark the location for the leg holes (it doesn't have to be super-accurate as the stretchy knit fabric is forgiving). Cut across the jumper under the armholes to make a tube of fabric and use the paper pattern to cut out the shape of the sweater from the centre fold. Sew it together from the neck to the belly opening and finish the edges as desired. Fold over and sew a casing for elastic at the neckline.

> “MANY DOGS HAVE THEIR OWN COSY COATS, BUT A BREATHABLE KNIT CAN STILL BE A WELCOME EXTRA LAYER AT THIS TIME OF YEAR.”
>
> MELODY LORD, CRAFTER AND WRITER

TIPS AND TRICKS

- Make sure you choose a jumper that’s labelled machine-washable, so that it won’t shrink when you wash it or if it gets wet.
- Cotton, acrylic, polycotton, bamboo and wool-acrylic mixtures are the most suitable fabrics. Pure wool can make a dog too hot, especially if your pooch is an active dog.
- Cut the jumper slightly bigger than you think you need. You can always trim off extra fabric, but you can’t add it back on!
- Remove all labels and tags from inside the jumper so they don’t irritate your pet. ■

better pets

[CAROLINE ZAMBRANO INVESTIGATES THE SUPERMAN POSE AND SHARES REAL-LIFE HEROES.]

HOW DOGS LEAD THE WAY

Each year, International Assistance Dog Week (August 3-9, 2025) celebrates extraordinary service dogs and their trainers. Take Kirsch the golden retriever, who earned an honorary counselling degree at John Hopkins University after attending every class with his visually impaired owner, Carlos Mora. Or Orient the German shepherd, who led his human Bill Irwin through a 3000km-plus trek along the United States' Appalachian Trail in 1990, making Bill the first profoundly blind person to complete an unsupported hike of the track. From guiding their handlers through classrooms to achieving personal goals, assistance dogs bring independence and joy to people's lives. This August, we pay special tribute to the devoted dogs and trainers of Guide Dogs NSW/ACT for turning pups into everyday superheroes. To find out how you can help their work, head to **nsw.guidedogs.com.au**.

Dog nap decoder

Pay attention to your pup's favourite sleeping position – it can tell you a lot about them.

From the donut curl to the Superman pose, your dog's sleeping position can reveal a lot about their physical health and emotional state. Dog behaviourist Lara Shannon, host of *Animal SOS Australia* (catch it on 7TWO and 7plus), spoke with *BHG* about the hidden meaning of those doggy snoozing styles.

The position Fido sleeps in can affect the quality of their rest. REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep – the stage when they may twitch, run or woof in their dreams – is crucial for their cognitive and physical health.

A single sleep cycle lasts for 20 minutes in dogs (compared with 90 minutes in humans). For about six of those 20 minutes, your dog will be in REM sleep. But to reach this restorative sleep cycle, dogs need to feel safe, comfortable and be undisturbed.

As dogs typically sleep for 11-14 hours a day (longer for puppies and senior pooches), it's easy to catch them napping! "Our pets' sleeping positions speak volumes, if we just take the time to notice," Lara says.

Side-sleeper

A dog stretched out on their side with their legs extended is likely feeling safe, relaxed and comfortable in familiar surroundings. The position allows for deep sleep. ***"It's my favourite to see," says Lara. "It shows they're calm and comfortable."***

The lion's pose

When dogs rest with their head on their paws like a lion or sphinx, they're not fully relaxed. In this position, dogs may also tuck in their paws and rest their back legs on the side. ***"This is not a deep-sleep pose," explains Lara. "They're alert and waiting to move, if needed. Think of it as a light nap between action."***

The Superman

Lying flat on their tummy with legs stretched out front and back, the Superman pose is typical in puppies and high-energy dogs that are always ready to jump into action. ***"It's also a comfortable position for naps and a great way to cool off," adds Lara.***

Photography Adobe Stock

> “SIDE SLEEPING SHOWS A DOG IS COMFORTABLE.”
>
> **LARA SHANNON, DOG BEHAVIOURIST**

Belly up

Sprawled on their back with legs in the air and belly exposed? Looks funny, but it’s a strong sign of trust. ***“If your dog has anxiety and you spot your dog sleeping belly up, it’s a great sign,” says Lara. “It shows they feel safe and content. Some dogs could be hinting at a good thigh tickle in this position!”***

The cuddler

Some dogs love to sleep snuggled up against something. That can be back-to-back or even on top of their people or other pets. ***“It’s a sign of affection, trust and bonding,” says Lara.***

The donut curl

Curled into a tight circle with legs tucked close and sometimes nose touching their hind legs, your dog is tapping into wild instincts to preserve heat and protect vital organs. ***“It’s common in winter when your dog wants to keep warm or if they feel vulnerable – that’s common in new surroundings,” says Lara. “Some may also burrow into blankets or pillows to comfort or self-soothe.”***

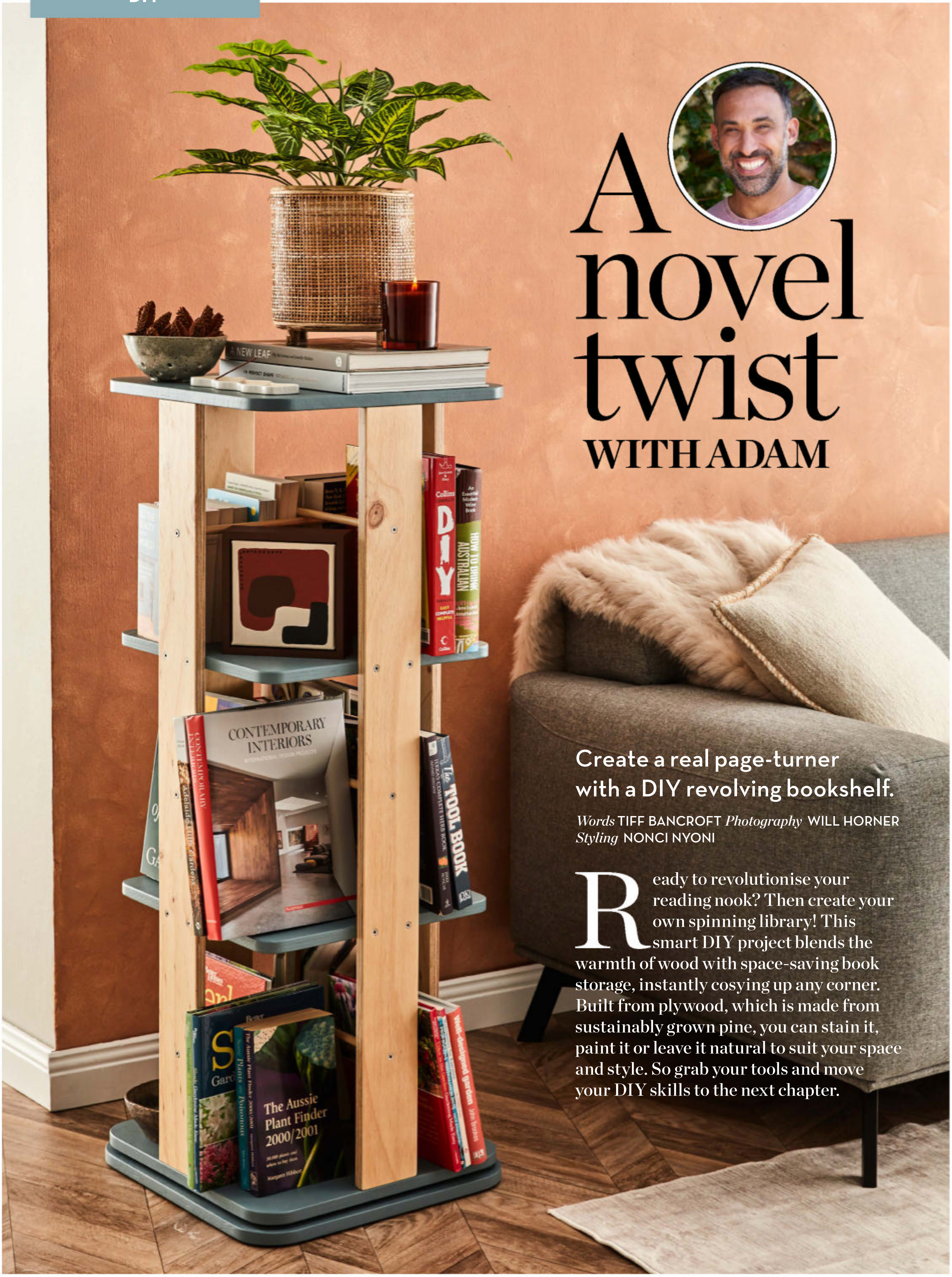
Let sleeping dogs lie

Never disturb a sleeping dog, advises Lara. This is especially important for children, who could startle their furry companion and risk being bitten.

Creature comforts

Sleeping needs can change with age and the seasons. ***“Older dogs benefit from orthopaedic beds to support joints. Outdoor sleepers in winter need insulated beds with sides and blankets, while summer calls for cool, flat mats,” says Lara. “And remember, a sudden shift in sleep habits, such as restlessness, sleeping more or adopting an unusual position, could signal a health issue. It may be worth checking with your vet.”*** ■

SCAN ME
Scan the QR code to shop cosy dog beds.



A novel twist

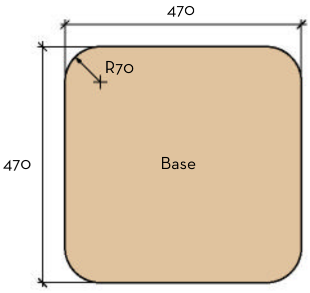
WITH ADAM

Create a real page-turner with a DIY revolving bookshelf.

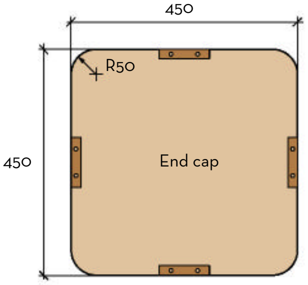
Words TIFF BANCROFT *Photography* WILL HORNER
Styling NONCI NYONI

Ready to revolutionise your reading nook? Then create your own spinning library! This smart DIY project blends the warmth of wood with space-saving book storage, instantly cosying up any corner. Built from plywood, which is made from sustainably grown pine, you can stain it, paint it or leave it natural to suit your space and style. So grab your tools and move your DIY skills to the next chapter.

EASY STEPS TO A REVOLVING BOOKSHELF


470
470
R70
Base

R = radius curve

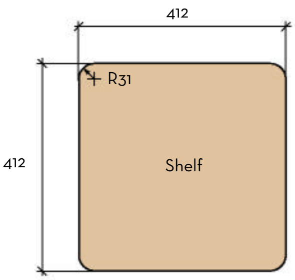

450
450
R50
End cap

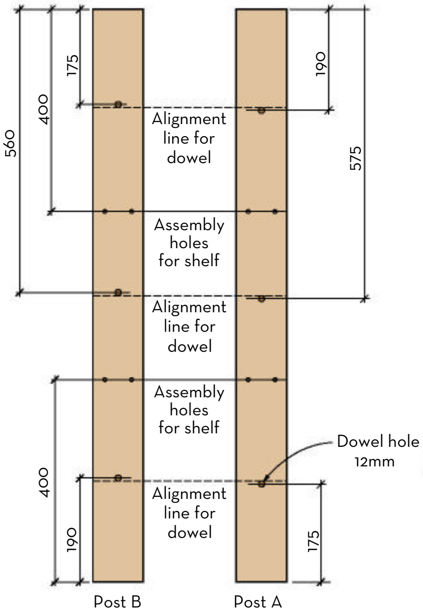
Gather your supplies

- 2400 x 1200 x 19mm pine plywood
- 12.5mm round pine dowel
- 12g 50mm bugle screws
- Primer
- Satin-finish trim paint (we used Porter's Paints Hamptons Blue)
- Clear topcoat
- 300mm lazy susan bearing plate
- Felt floor pads (4)

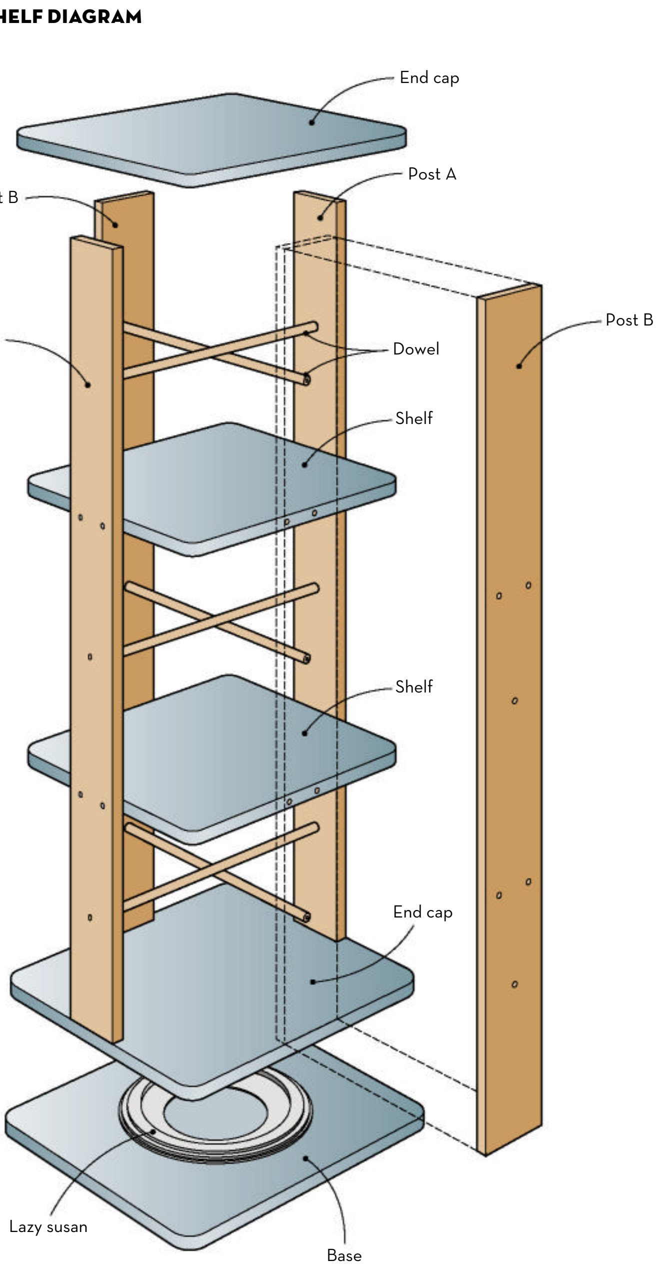
You'll also need

Tape measure; pencil; combination square; circular saw; straight plank and clamps; ruler; compass; jigsaw; drill; countersink drill bits; screwdriver bits; 80-grit sandpaper; PVA glue; paintbrush; nap roller and tray; 19mm spade bit.


412
412
R31
Shelf


560
400
175
190
575
Alignment line for dowel
Assembly holes for shelf
Alignment line for dowel
Assembly holes for shelf
Alignment line for dowel
Dowel hole 12mm
400
190
175
Post B
Post A

BOOKSHELF DIAGRAM


End cap
Post B
Post A
Post A
Post B
Dowel
Shelf
Shelf
End cap
Lazy susan
Base

ADAM DOVILE
Join me as I show you how to create great spaces on *BHG* TV, Fridays at 7pm on Channel 7.
For more DIY tips, go to **BHG.COM.AU**

Components for revolving bookshelf (all measurements in mm)

PART	SIZE	MATERIAL	QTY	CORNER CURVE RADIUS
Base	470 x 470 x 19	Plywood	1	70
End cap	450 x 450 x 19	Plywood	2	50
Shelf	412 x 412 x 19	Plywood	2	31
Post	1133 x 100 x 19	Plywood	4	n/a
Dowel	424 x 12	Pine dowel	6	n/a

Project notes

Save the hassle of cutting and get your local hardware store to cut large plywood sheets to size.

Safety notes When operating power tools, wear safety glasses, a mask and earmuffs, and tie your hair back. Get help when lifting heavy or large components.

Here's how

STEP 1 Measure, mark and cut all plywood and dowel components using a tape measure, pencil, combination square and circular saw. (Refer to the components table on previous page.) Use a straight plank and a clamp to produce an accurate straight edge.

STEP 2 Refer to diagram and components table on previous page. Mark corner curves on Base, End caps and Shelves with a ruler, compass and pencil. Cut along curves with a jigsaw.

STEP 3 Refer to the End cap panel diagram. Drill two equally spaced countersunk holes on all sides of both End caps (for Post assembly) as shown in the diagram.

STEP 4 Refer to the Post diagrams. On each Post B and Post A component, measure and mark the Shelf and Dowel assembly holes. Drill all holes with a 4mm countersink drill bit.

STEP 5 Sand all sawn edges and faces of components with 80-grit sandpaper; wipe away dust.

STEP 6 With a nap roller and tray, apply primer to the Base, End caps and Shelves. Allow to dry. Apply two coats of trim paint (allow to dry after each coat).

STEP 7 With a paintbrush, apply a clear topcoat to all Dowels and Posts.

STEP 8 On a flat surface, stand two Shelves on their edges, parallel and about 400mm apart. Apply PVA glue to the centre of the edges, then attach one Post A, aligning the double assembly holes with each Shelf. Using the holes as guides, predrill two pilot holes into each Shelf. Insert and tighten bugle screws.

STEP 9 Apply glue to one end of three Dowels. Attach Dowels to Post A, between the Shelves and aligned with the single assembly holes. Repeat method in Step 8 to secure Dowels to Post A.

STEP 10 Repeat the method in Steps 8 and 9 with the second Post A to attach to the Shelves, Dowels and the first Post A.

STEP 11 Flip assembly and repeat Steps 8–10 to attach the two Post B components and remaining Dowels.

STEP 12 Flip assembly upright and apply PVA glue to one end of all Posts. Attach an End cap. Predrill two equally spaced countersunk holes through the End cap and into a Post, insert and tighten bugle screws. Repeat for the opposite Post, then the remaining two Posts.

STEP 13 Flip assembly upside down and repeat Step 12 to attach the remaining End cap to the other end of the bookshelf.

STEP 14 Lay the lazy susan template (in the packet) onto the centre of the Base. Mark four screw attachment holes and the access hole. Drill access hole with a 19mm spade bit.

STEP 15 Attach the lazy susan bearing plate to the End cap with four screws (included in the packet).

STEP 16 Place Base centred onto the End cap with lazy susan face down. Carefully rotate the Base until access hole reveals the screw holes. Insert and attach the lazy susan to the End cap with four screws (included).

STEP 17 Attach four felt protection pads to the Base, then flip the bookshelf upright to complete. ■

FOR PROJECT AND SHOPPING SUPPLIES, SEE OUR STOCKISTS PAGE ON P187.

Project John Rae; illustrations Steve Pollitt

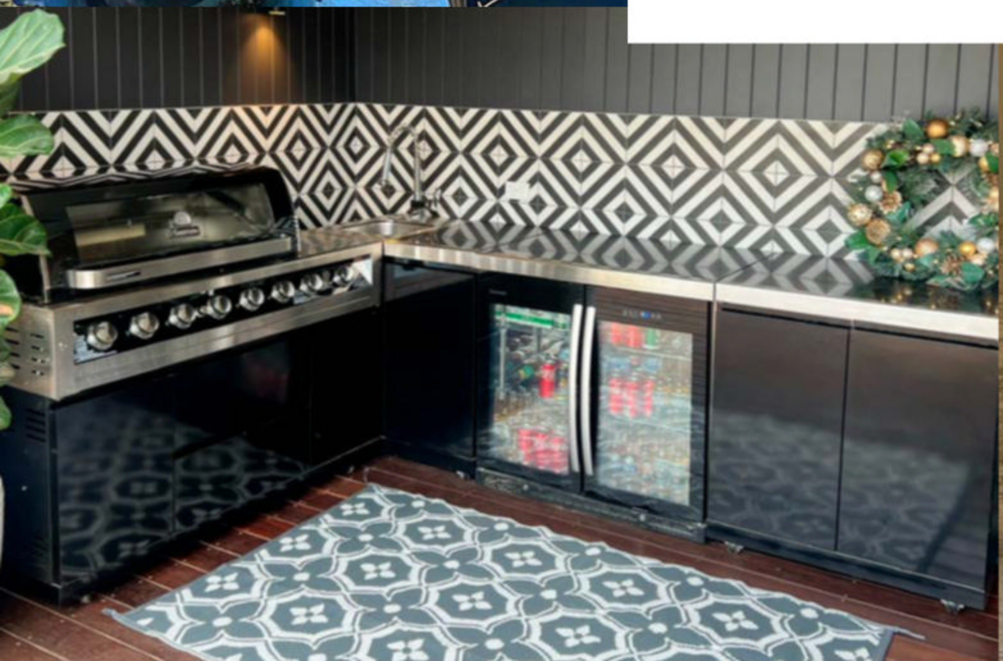
> “THIS CLEVER SPINNING SHELF COMBINES FORM AND FUNCTION TO ORGANISE YOUR BOOKS AND TREASURES.”
>
> TIFF BANCROFT, DIY EDITOR

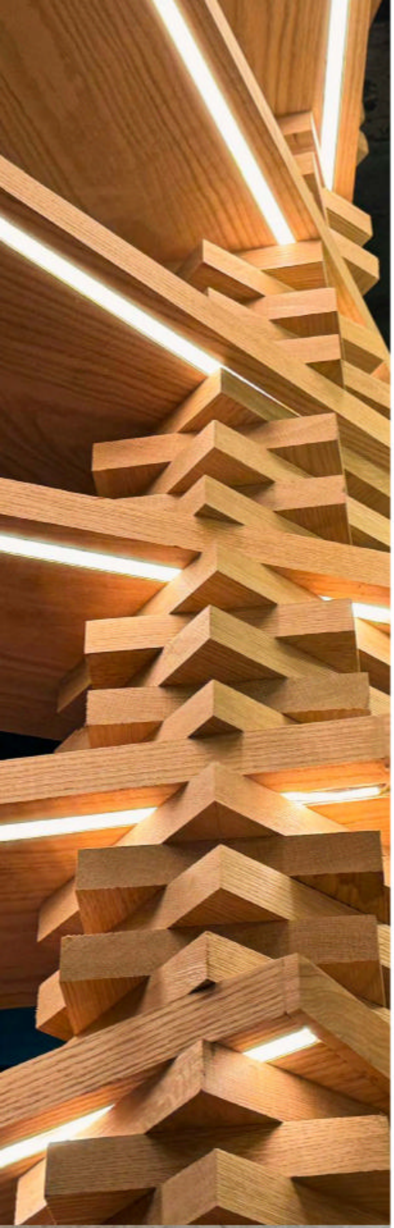
Better Homes and Gardens

TRADIE OF THE YEAR 2025

Sponsored by WITZER

ANNOUNCING THE AUSSIE HEROES





Better Homes and Gardens
TRADIE OF THE YEAR 2025
Sponsored by WITZER

Better Homes and Gardens is celebrating the Tradie of the Year Awards to recognise the incredible talent, dedication and community spirit of tradies across Australia. From sparkies and chippies to plumbers and tilers, the nominations we received were heartfelt, inspiring and also humbling.

From hundreds of entries, four exceptional category winners were selected across innovation, craftsmanship, being new to their trade, and a standout apprentice.

It was eye opening to see the scale of contribution, talent and aspiration in our Australian trade landscape, and wonderful to see and hear the appreciation within communities. We saw nominations from business owners, clients, friends, colleagues and, of course, mums.

Each category winner has been selected based on the merit of their technical excellence, impact to community, and quality and pride in their work.

Read on to discover more about these top tradies, our special mentions in each category, and our overall Tradie of the Year!

Artisan of the Year

Jonathan Friend – *JForm*

Creative to the core, Jonathan doesn't just build, he designs experiences. His boutique construction company JForm has earned a cult following for bold colour, architectural precision and soulful timber craftsmanship. From wine bars to home studios, his work blends flair with practicality.

Based in Sydney, Jonathan deserves this award for his work elevating construction to an artform and building with both his hands and heart.

Special mentions for the Artisan of the Year category

SAM SPONG
From international medals to mentoring the next generation, Sam's craftsmanship cements him as a bricklayer hero.

BINDI DAY
Bindi transforms homes with precision and pride, leading a First Nations, female-led painting business (BindiLee).

JUSTIN HOWDEN
More than a plumber, Justin's community service for palliative care and local kids make him an artisan with a purpose.

COOPER MCCARTHY
A craftsman with heart, Cooper transforms outdoor spaces and lives through hard work and dedication to family and community.

TIM MACARTNEY
With elite fault-finding skills and a calm approach, Tim sets the standard for excellence and customer care at Enviro Electrical.

ASH DONGARA
More than a skilled arborist, Ash's compassion saved a family of orphaned owls, proving that true artisans protect nature and the job.

DION DALEY
Precision, pride and principle define Dion. A bricklayer who won't cut corners, only clean lines.

MELISSA CATTLE
A creative powerhouse with a heart for helping, Melissa champions small jobs, female apprentices and DIY dreams, proving no job is too small for big impact.

Apprentice of the Year

Jack Reed

Electrician

Dyslexic but determined, Jack has turned challenges into fuel. Now 20 and thriving as an apprentice electrician in Queensland, he combines an incredible work ethic with a generous spirit.

Jack volunteers regularly with the SES, contributing his time every Monday night after a full day of work. He recently helped secure homes and assisted in the clean-up after Cyclone Alfred. Closer to home, Jack supports his family and community, even lighting up his family's backyard dreams. He's the kind of tradie every site wants, and his family is proud as punch.

Well done to Jack for his grit, humility and future potential as a leader in his trade and his community.

Special mentions for the Apprentice of the Year category

DYLAN MORRIS
A former pilot turned diesel-fitting apprentice, Dylan's excellence has already earned him "Apprentice of the Year" at Glencore as well as the respect of his colleagues.

ANNIE GRIFFIN
A trailblazer in mechanics, Annie became the first female mechanical fitter at Atlas Copco, where she's now mentoring others.

COOPER COLLINS
Second-year apprentice carpenter Cooper Collins goes above and beyond, volunteering to do free carpentry work at a local retirement village.

DANE TROTMAN
Clients often mention plumbing apprentice Dane by name in their 5-star reviews. His work ethic and problem solving make him a standout member of the Nettelbeck Plumbing & Gas team.

ANASTACIA FLACK
Female glaziers aren't common, and Anastacia juggles full-time work, elite sport and community spirit with unmatched drive.

Innovator of the Year

Kimberley Smyth

Hey Sista Plumbing

Plumber, business owner, changemaker and mother of four, Kimberley Smyth is reshaping plumbing from the inside out. Founder of Hey Sista Plumbing in Melbourne, Kimberley built her all-female plumbing team to create safe, respectful spaces for women, especially those with experiences of domestic violence or trauma.

She didn't just break into a male-dominated industry as a mature age student, she's building pathways for other women to follow, offering apprenticeships, mentorship and real opportunity.

Special mentions for the Innovator of the Year category

RYAN WILSON
Founder of *Free Trade Day* in his local area, Ryan rewires what it means to be a tradie, combining electrical prowess with community impact.

ANTHONY ANTOUN
From 3D drone design to sustainable landscape solutions, Anthony is landscaping the future of construction with tech, talent and tenacity.

HANNAH CHENOWETH
With grace and a power drill in hand, Hannah is carving out new space for women and inclusivity in the trades.

STUART JOYCE
From off-grid farms to multi-site solar hubs, Stu's high-voltage solutions are lighting the way for regional innovation.

GAVIN DORAN
Using YouTube to educate the world one pipe at a time, Gavin is diving into digital innovation in the plumbing and trade space.

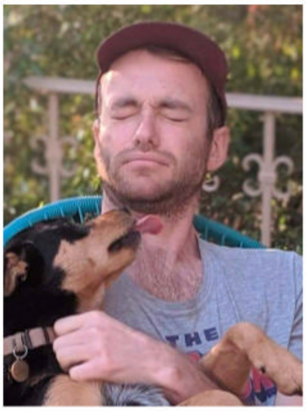
BRENTON MATTERS
Blending diesel mechanics with med-tech vision, Brenton's world-first patient transfer system is reshaping care with dignity.

SHARIF BAYTIEH
From flood-prone land to flourishing gardens, Sharif turns obstacles into inspired outdoor engineering with heart and smarts.

New to the Trade

Cody Shannon

The Chip Shop Carpentry



A former vet turned carpenter, Cody's career change is anything but ordinary. Combining his passion for sustainability with a unique understanding of functional design, Cody founded The Chip Shop Carpentry in Melbourne to be as environmentally conscious as it is community-minded. He's also been able to combine his two passions, contributing his time and skills to recent renovations at Thornbury Veterinary Hospital. Congratulations to Cody for boldly reimagining what it means to start fresh, and building with brains, purpose and soul.

Special mention for the New to the Trade category

MORGAN PURDIE
Turning blocked drains into 5-star days, Morgan's passion for plumbing is as genuine as it gets.

SCOTT HUELIN
From the police force to in-demand handyman, Scott's precision and pride have set a new standard for the trade.

JAMES BURROWS
At just 24, James is building more than homes; he's building a legacy of excellence and mentorship.

LACHLAN CHALMS
With just a year in, Chalms is already the go-to handyman with a golden rep and grateful clientele.

LEE O'SULLIVAN
Lee's sharp eye and sharper skills prove he's not just learning construction, he's helping shape it.

NATHAN MORGAN
From FIFO mechanic to Perth's rope splicing go-to, Nathan's quality work is making waves across the yacht clubs.

BEAU LIVINGSTON
In the heat of the north, Queenslander Beau's bright brushstrokes and big heart are transforming homes and lives.

Congratulations!

Overall winner: Tradie of the Year

Kimberley Smyth

Hey Sista Plumbing

Out of the hundreds of deserving entries, one extraordinary tradie stood out to be named Tradie of the Year. This entry went above and beyond, shattering social norms and expectations.

To our winner Kimberley Smyth, your work inspires us all. You've shown that with courage and compassion, you can build not only a business, but a movement.

To every nominee, thank you for the work you do, and the way you do it. You're not just building homes, you're shaping communities.

Better Homes and Gardens
TRADIE OF THE YEAR
2025
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Thanks to Witzer for making the Tradie of the Year Awards possible. The Witzer payment platform and app helps you project manage like a pro.

With thanks to supporting partner, Taylors Wines

TAYLORS

Relax at The Carpenters Arms in Stanton Wick, Somerset, England.

Cosy getaways

These global destinations and experiences add a whole new level of comfort and snugness to your travels.

Words MEGAN OSBORNE

Roam the picturesque village of Castle Combe in the Cotswolds, England.

Toasty tavern tales

WHAT Take your pick of cosy English pubs with open fireplaces.
WHERE Cotswolds and rural England.
WHEN England has a reputation for being grey and gloomy at times, but that makes it a perfect place to get cosy inside. It's coldest from December to February, with outside temperatures ranging from 1–7°C.
TRY Don't go past a classic Sunday roast with all the trimmings. Research ahead to find pubs that have cosy open fires!

SCAN ME
Hire a car with Hertz to explore the English countryside at your leisure.

Photography Michael Cummins Photography (The Carpenters Arms)

Flame in the cold

WHAT Stay in a cabin in Finland on Lake Inari and watch the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights) light up the frosty skies.

WHERE Lake Inari, Finland.

WHEN While a sighting of the phenomenon isn't guaranteed, the best viewing months are September to October and February to March (with March statistically being your best bet).

TRY Rug up for a winter adventure and book accommodation at a proven lookout spot, such as a log villa on Lake Inari.

Go aurora hunting in Lake Inari, Finland.

SCAN ME
Book this log villa or similar on Airbnb.

The cosiest tea party

WHAT Pop into The Tea Cosy tea room for a Devonshire tea.
WHERE The Rocks, Sydney.
WHEN Any time, but it's especially inviting during the cooler months.
TRY Go for the famous classic Devonshire scones that are freshly baked daily, or try the special flavour on offer (rose has been a hit in the past). Plus, help yourself to the communal knitting basket for wintry vibes.

SCAN ME
Get inspired and knit a tea cosy with pretty pansies, using this free pattern from The Australian Yarn Company. Grab quality yarn and needles, too!

Photography AdobeStock, Unsplash, Leo Visions

Mist and minerals

WHAT Step into cerulean waters at the geothermal Blue Lagoon in Iceland.
WHERE Grindavík, Iceland.
WHEN While the water stays a consistent temperature through the year, what changes is the outside air. If you're seeking more daylight and milder weather, go in summer (June to September). If you don't mind braving a cold wind and a 0°C forecast, the pay-off could be seeing the Northern Lights. The likelihood peaks between September and April.
TRY Even though the outside may be brisk, step into these geothermal waters to enjoy 37-39°C bathing temperatures. Use available face masks or, to level up your experience, book in for luxury spa treatments or an overnight stay. ■

SCAN ME
Snap up a great deal on flights to Iceland (capital Reykjavik) from major Aussie cities.

Everyday *comfort*

Crowd-pleasing favourites get a time-saving update using a Thermomix. Discover these tasty recipes, sampled from the new book *Thermomix Everyday*.

Photography JOHN PAUL URIZAR *Food styling* OLIVIA BLACKMORE

MOCHA CROISSANT PUDDING

Recipe on page 136

POTATO AND MUSHROOM GRATIN
Recipe on page 136

THREE-CHEESE LASAGNE
Recipe on page 138

MOCHA CROISSANT PUDDING

Preparation time 15 mins
Total time 1 hour 15 mins
Serves 10
Thermomix models
TM7/TM6/TM5/TM31

20g butter, plus extra to grease
80g sultanas
60g coffee or liqueur of choice
180g dark chocolate, broken into pieces
100g hazelnut chocolate spread
8 croissants (about 380g)
75g caster sugar
4 eggs
240g milk
240g pouring (whipping) cream
2 tsp vanilla bean extract
2 tsp icing sugar, sifted, to dust

KITCHEN EXTRAS
Round ceramic baking dish (22cm x 8.5cm deep)

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 160°C (fan-forced). Grease a 22cm round, 8.5cm deep ceramic baking dish and set aside.
STEP 2 Place a bowl onto the mixing bowl lid and weigh sultanas and coffee or liqueur of choice into it. Set aside for 10 minutes for sultanas to soak.
STEP 3 Meanwhile, place chocolate into the mixing bowl and grate for 4 sec/speed 7. Transfer to a small bowl and set aside.
STEP 4 Place another small bowl onto the mixing bowl lid and weigh chocolate spread into it. Cut croissants in half, spread chocolate spread on the bottom half, then sandwich together with croissant tops.
STEP 5 Arrange four croissants, slightly open and overlapping each other, in the base of the prepared dish. Top with half the chopped chocolate and half the soaked sultanas, then repeat with the remaining croissants, chocolate and sultanas.
STEP 6 Add the sugar, eggs, milk, cream and vanilla into the mixing bowl, then mix for 10 sec/speed 4. Pour cream mixture over the croissants and let it stand for 10 minutes or until the liquid soaks into the croissants. Dot butter over the top of the pudding.
STEP 7 Bake for 45 minutes or until just set. Let stand for 10 minutes. Serve warm pudding dusted with sifted icing sugar.

POTATO AND MUSHROOM GRATIN

Preparation time 20 mins
Total time 2 hours 5 mins
Serves 6
Thermomix models
TM7/TM6/TM5/TM31

1kg (1000g) baby white potatoes, unpeeled, in 5mm slices
200g swiss brown mushrooms, sliced
20g mixed dried mushrooms
150g cheddar, cut into 3cm pieces
100g parmesan, cut into 3cm pieces
20g extra virgin olive oil, plus extra to grease
200g brown onion, peeled, quartered
1 sprig rosemary, leaves only, plus extra to garnish
2 cloves garlic, peeled
125g white wine
¼ tsp sea salt
¼ tsp ground black pepper
2 tsp cornflour
30g vegetable stock paste (recipe at cookidoo.com.au)
300g thickened cream
40g wholegrain mustard

KITCHEN EXTRAS
Baking dish (3.7 litres)

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 160°C (fan-forced). Slice potatoes and swiss brown mushrooms with the Thermomix Cutter on 'Thick' setting (or cut into 5mm slices by hand).
STEP 2 Place a bowl on mixing bowl lid and weigh dried mushrooms and 50g of boiling water into it, then set aside.
STEP 3 Place cheeses into mixing bowl and grate for 3 sec/speed 9. Transfer to a separate bowl and set aside. Rinse and dry mixing bowl.
STEP 4 Place oil, onion, rosemary and garlic in mixing bowl and chop for 3 sec/speed 7, then sauté for 5 min/120°C/speed 2.
STEP 5 Add swiss brown mushrooms, soaked dried mushrooms and their liquid, wine, salt, pepper and cornflour, then cook for 10 min/100°C/↺/speed 1.
STEP 6 Place a large jug onto the mixing bowl lid and weigh 300g water, the stock paste, cream and mustard into it. Stir to combine and set cream mixture aside.
STEP 7 Grease a 3.7-litre baking dish, then arrange one-third of the potato slices, slightly overlapping, over the base. Top with one-third of the grated cheese, then half the mushroom mixture. Repeat layering, then arrange the remaining potato slices, slightly overlapping, around the edge of the dish. Set aside the remaining cheese.
STEP 8 Pour cream mixture over potatoes and bake, uncovered, for 1 hour. Top with remaining cheese, garnish with rosemary, then bake for a further 30 minutes or until golden. Let stand for 15 minutes before serving.

> “THE COMBO OF CINNAMON, GINGER AND MIXED SPICE CREATES THE PERFECT BLEND OF COSY FLAVOUR IN THESE TASTY CAKES.”
>
> SARAH MURPHY, SENIOR FOOD EDITOR

SPICED ORANGE, PUMPKIN AND PRUNE CAKES
Recipe on page 138

THREE-CHEESE LASAGNE

Preparation time 10 mins
Total time 1 hour 50 mins
Serves 8
Thermomix models TM7/TM6/TM5

CHEESE SAUCE

350g mozzarella, cut into 3cm pieces
60g parmesan, cut into 3cm pieces
¼ tsp sea salt
¼ tsp ground black pepper
1kg (1000g) cottage cheese
2 free-range eggs

MEAT SAUCE

3 cloves garlic, peeled
200g brown onion, peeled, quartered
50g celery, cut into pieces
100g carrot, cut into pieces
1 tsp fennel seeds
100g speck, cut into pieces
40g extra virgin olive oil
30g meat stock paste (recipe at cookidoo.com.au)
150g white wine
400g canned diced tomatoes
40g tomato paste
10 sprigs fresh parsley, leaves only
1 tsp dried Italian herbs
500g beef mince
500g pork mince

ASSEMBLY

375g fresh lasagne sheets
Grated parmesan cheese, to serve

KITCHEN EXTRAS

Ceramic or cast-iron baking dish (32cm x 24.5cm x 7cm) – see ***The Mix Shop at thermomix.com.au for a 3.7 litre Firra cast-iron baking dish***

STEP 1 For the cheese sauce, place 100g of the mozzarella into the mixing bowl and grate for 5 sec/speed 9. Transfer to a bowl and set aside.
STEP 2 Place parmesan, remaining 250g mozzarella, salt and pepper in the mixing bowl, then grate for 5 sec/speed 9.
STEP 3 Add cottage cheese and eggs and mix for 30 sec/speed 5. Transfer sauce to a separate bowl and set aside. Clean and dry the mixing bowl.
STEP 4 For the meat sauce, place garlic, onion, celery, carrot, fennel seeds, speck and oil into mixing bowl and chop for 5 sec/speed 7, then cook for 5 min/120°C/speed 2.
STEP 5 Add 150g water, meat stock paste, wine, tomatoes, tomato paste, parsley and dried herbs. Insert simmering basket into the mixing bowl, weigh mince into it and cook for 15 min/120°C/speed 2.
STEP 6 Stir mince with a spatula to break it up and ensure even cooking, then cook for a further 15 min/120°C/speed 2. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 180°C (fan-forced).
STEP 7 Remove simmering basket with the aid of the spatula. Transfer mince into the mixing bowl and mix for 5 sec/↺/speed 2 to gently break up any lumps.
STEP 8 To assemble, take baking dish (32cm x 24.5cm x 7cm) and build your lasagne layers, starting with the meat sauce, then pasta sheets and reserved cheese sauce. Repeat until all ingredients are used, finishing with a layer of cheese sauce and the reserved grated mozzarella.
STEP 9 Bake for 45 minutes. Leave lasagne to stand for 15 minutes. Sprinkle with grated parmesan to serve.

SPICED ORANGE, PUMPKIN AND PRUNE CAKES

Preparation time 15 mins
Total time 1 hour 5 mins
Makes 4 cakes
Thermomix models TM7/TM6/TM5/TM31

250g butter, plus extra to grease
150g dried pitted prunes
275g freshly squeezed orange juice
1 cinnamon quill
20g Grand Marnier (optional)
1 orange, peel only, no white pith
125g caster sugar
3 eggs
200g roasted pumpkin, cooled and mashed, or 200g cooked and cooled mashed pumpkin
100g honey
300g self-raising flour
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp ground ginger
½ tsp mixed spice
100g apricot jam
30g flaked coconut, toasted

KITCHEN EXTRAS

Rose gold mini springform cake pans (11.5cm x 5.8cm) – see ***The Mix Shop at thermomix.com.au***

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 160°C (fan-forced). Grease and line four mini cake tins (11.5cm x 5.8cm) and set aside.
STEP 2 Place prunes, 150g of the orange juice, the cinnamon and Grand Marnier (if using) into the mixing bowl, then cook for 5 min/100°C/speed 1.
STEP 3 Remove cinnamon quill, then blend for 10 sec/speed 6. Transfer prune puree to a bowl and set aside. Clean and dry the mixing bowl.

> “CLASSIC BANANA CAKE GETS A MAJOR SHOT OF GLAM WITH THIS LUSCIOUS CARAMELISED BANANA TOP.”
>
> SARAH MURPHY, SENIOR FOOD EDITOR

STICKY BANANA UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE

Recipe on page 140

STEP 4 Place orange peel and 25g of the sugar into the mixing bowl and chop 20 sec/speed 9. Scrape down sides of mixing bowl.
STEP 5 Add butter and remaining 100g sugar, then mix for 10 sec/speed 8. Scrape down sides of mixing bowl.
STEP 6 Insert butterfly whisk and whip for 2 min/speed 3. Scrape down sides of mixing bowl.
STEP 7 Add eggs. Whip for 1 min 30 sec/speed 3. Scrape down sides of bowl.
STEP 8 Add cooled, mashed pumpkin, remaining 125g orange juice and the honey and mix for 10 sec/speed 4.
STEP 9 Add flour and spices, then combine for 30 sec/speed 1. Remove butterfly whisk. Divide half the batter between the four tins, top each with an equal amount of prune puree and swirl through the batter with a skewer. Top with remaining batter, then bake 40 minutes or until a wooden skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Clean and dry mixing bowl.
STEP 10 Place a bowl onto the mixing bowl lid and weigh jam into it. Add 1 tablespoon boiling water and mix to combine. Drizzle glaze over warm cakes while still in the pans, then serve topped with toasted coconut.

COOK'S TIP

We used leftover roast pumpkin (without skin). You can use steamed, mashed pumpkin if you like.

STICKY BANANA UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE

Preparation time 15 mins
Total time 1 hour 40 mins
Serves 14
Thermomix models
TM7/TM6/TM5/TM31

150g brown sugar
100g butter, cut into pieces, plus extra to grease
8 ripe bananas
125g sour cream
180g vegetable oil
3 eggs
75g smooth nut butter (see Cook's Tip)
250g caster sugar
240g self-raising flour
60g almond meal (see Cook's Tip)
1 tsp bicarb soda
Pinch sea salt

KITCHEN EXTRAS
3.2 litre Firra round cast-iron casserole dish (32cm) – *see The Mix Shop at thermomix.com.au*

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 160°C (fan-forced). Generously grease a cast-iron casserole dish (32cm) and set aside.
STEP 2 To make caramel, place brown sugar and butter into the mixing bowl and cook for 8 min/100°C/speed 2. Pour caramel into prepared dish and spread evenly over base.
STEP 3 Peel five of the bananas and halve lengthways. Arrange halved bananas cut-side down over caramel, working from the outside inwards and following the shape of the dish, trimming bananas if necessary.
STEP 4 Peel remaining three bananas and cut into halves. Place banana halves into mixing bowl and mash for 5 sec/speed 5.
STEP 5 Add sour cream, oil, eggs, nut butter and caster sugar, then mix for 10 sec/speed 5.
STEP 6 Add flour, almond meal, bicarb soda and salt, then mix for 10 sec/speed 5. Pour batter over bananas and smooth the top.
STEP 7 Bake for 1 hour or until a skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean. Set aside in dish for 10 minutes before inverting onto a serving plate to cool. Serve with cream or ice cream.

COOK'S TIP

You can make your own nut butter and nut meals in a Thermomix. You'll find recipes on **cookidoo.com.au**.

RHUBARB AND GINGER JAM

Preparation time 10 mins
Total time 55 mins
Makes 580g
Thermomix models
TM7/TM6/TM5/TM31

30g crystallised ginger
200g raw sugar
1 vanilla bean, cut in half
550g rhubarb, trimmed and cut into 4cm pieces
20g lemon juice

KITCHEN EXTRAS
Sealable sterilised jars

STEP 1 Place ginger into the mixing bowl and chop for 5 sec/speed 7. Transfer to a bowl and set aside.
STEP 2 Place sugar and vanilla bean into the mixing bowl and mill for 10 sec/speed 10.
STEP 3 Add rhubarb and lemon juice. Place Varoma dish without lid on mixing bowl lid and cook for 25 min/120°C/speed 1.
STEP 4 Add reserved ginger to mixing bowl. Replace Varoma dish and cook for a further 15 min/120°C/speed🥄. Test the setting point to ensure the jam is ready (see the Setting Point Test, below).
STEP 5 Carefully pour into sterilised jars, seal immediately and invert for 10 minutes. Turn right-side up and leave to cool completely. Store in the pantry for up to three months. Refrigerate once opened.

SETTING POINT TEST

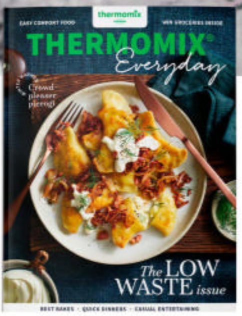
Place a teaspoon of jam on a chilled plate. When the jam is cool, draw a line through it with your finger. If the jam stays in place, it's ready. If not, place Varoma dish without lid on the mixing bowl lid and cook for a further 2 min/Varoma/↺/speed 1, then test again. ■

Food preparation Rebecca Lyall

RHUBARB AND GINGER JAM
Recipe opposite

THERMOMIX EVERYDAY

This is an edited extract from *Thermomix Everyday*, $12.99, available at selected supermarkets, newsagents and **themixshop.com.au**. Scan the code to shop now.


thermomix
THERMOMIX
Everyday
Crowd-pleaser pierogi
The LOW WASTE issue

Rest assured

What you eat and drink before bed could just be the key to a better night's rest. Find tips and recipes for easy zzzs.

Words SARAH MURPHY

If you're tossing and turning at night, you're not alone. About 44 per cent, or nearly half, of adult Australians are surviving on six hours of sleep a night or less, according to a recent YouGov survey, commissioned by Pukka. That's well below the recommended eight hours of snooze. Stress and screen time play a role, but caffeine is also a powerful sleep disruptor.

The same survey found one in seven Australians may be consuming caffeine too close to bedtime, whether it's a late-afternoon coffee, black or even green tea. Studies show that when you consume caffeine within six hours of sleep, your total rest time can be reduced by up to an hour!

What's on your plate matters, too. Olivia Arezzolo, a health author and speaker qualified in sleep psychology, says the right nutrients can help ease your body into a state of rest.

"Certain foods contain nutrients that function as natural sedatives, helping your body produce calming hormones like serotonin and melatonin, key ingredients for deep, restorative sleep," she explains.

"Tryptophan, in particular, is essential. This amino acid supports serotonin production, which has a big role in regulating both mood and sleep cycles. Including tryptophan-rich foods in your evening meals can naturally help your body wind down." (You can try out the sleep-supportive foods Olivia suggests in the list below.)

Olivia also often includes a caffeine-free herbal tea in her nighttime routine (she's fond of the Pukka Night Time blend). She suggests looking for ingredients such as lavender, hops, valerian and chamomile for a brew that helps you slide into slumber.

To discover some other tasty ways to promote sleep, turn the page.

TOP SLEEP-FRIENDLY FOODS

OATS AND BANANAS Natural sources of melatonin and serotonin-supporting nutrients.

TURKEY & TOFU Rich in tryptophan to promote serotonin production.

LEAFY GREENS Packed with calcium, which helps convert tryptophan into melatonin.

KIWI FRUIT Clinically shown to improve sleep quality and duration.

CHERRIES One of the few natural sources of melatonin.

ALMONDS AND PUMPKIN SEEDS High in magnesium to help relax muscles and soothe the nervous system.

Calcium in leafy vegies helps your body make melatonin to regulate your sleep cycle.

WINTER TABOULI WITH FISH

Preparation time 20 mins
Cooking time 20 mins
Serves 4

1 large head broccoli with stems, coarsely chopped
3 medium roma tomatoes, finely chopped
1 lebanese cucumber, peeled, finely chopped
3 green onions, finely chopped
1 cup loosely packed flat-leaf parsley leaves, finely chopped
1 ½ cups loosely packed mint leaves, finely chopped
Pinch ground allspice
Pinch ground cinnamon
¼ cup lime juice
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
4 x 200g skinless firm white fish fillets, halved
1 clove garlic, crushed
⅓ cup pepitas
1 small lime, cut into wedges

STEP 1 In a food processor, process broccoli including stems until finely chopped. Transfer to a large bowl. Stir in tomato, cucumber, green onion, flat-leaf parsley and mint.
STEP 2 Combine allspice, cinnamon, lime juice and half the oil in a small bowl. Season. Drizzle over salad.
STEP 3 Rub fish with garlic. Season. Heat remaining oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Cook fish in batches for 4 minutes each side or until just cooked through. Add pepitas to pan for last 2 minutes and cook, stirring occasionally, until lightly toasted.
STEP 4 Divide salad among serving bowls and top with fish and pepitas. Serve with lime wedges.

COOK'S TIPS

- You can use any white fish fillets – we used blue-eye trevalla. Just adjust cooking time depending on the thickness of the fillets.
- Make the salad and dressing up to eight hours ahead and refrigerate. Dress the salad just before serving.

TURKEY AND KALE LASAGNE

Recipe on page 148

POACHED CHICKEN WITH WINTER GREEN SALAD

Preparation time 20 mins plus 20 mins standing
Cooking time 15 mins
Serves 4

1 bunch coriander
1 medium lemon
1 Tbsp finely chopped lemongrass
1 tsp fine sea salt
4 chicken breast fillets
2 medium zucchini, quartered lengthways
2 lebanese cucumbers, quartered lengthways
2 bunches broccolini, trimmed
455g frozen edamame
2 green witlof, leaves separated
¾ cup blanched almonds, roasted, coarsely chopped

GREEN CHILLI DRESSING

4 long green chillies, halved, seeds removed
1 Tbsp finely chopped coriander leaves
½ tsp ground cumin
1 tsp pure maple syrup
2 Tbsp lime juice
⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season

STEP 1 Remove leaves from coriander and reserve for the dressing and for serving. Finely grate zest from lemon and juice the lemon (you'll need ¼ cup juice). Fill a large saucepan with water. Add coriander stems, lemon juice, lemongrass and salt. Bring to the boil on high heat. Add chicken and return to boil. Cover with a lid. Remove from heat. Leave to stand for 20 minutes.

STEP 2 Meanwhile, heat an oiled grill plate on high. Cook zucchini, cucumber and broccolini on grill for 3–4 minutes on each side or until lightly charred.

STEP 3 For the green chilli dressing, cook chilli on grill plate on high heat until lightly charred. Finely chop. In a small bowl, combine chilli with remaining ingredients. Season.

STEP 4 Cook edamame in a small saucepan of boiling water for 5 minutes. Refresh under cold water. Drain. Peel and transfer to a large bowl. Add lemon zest, charred vegetables, witlof and almonds and mix to combine.

STEP 5 Remove chicken from pan and shred or slice thinly. Add chicken to salad and spoon over green chilli dressing. Top with reserved coriander sprigs to serve.

COOK'S TIPS

- Use any barbecued green vegies in this salad – try it with asparagus, green beans or Asian greens.
- Make dressing up to three hours ahead. Store at room temperature.

SEED AND NUT BARS

Recipe on page 148

TURKEY AND KALE LASAGNE

Preparation time 20 mins plus 10 mins standing
Cooking time 55 mins
Serves 4

2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
300g kale or silverbeet, leaves reserved, stems finely chopped
500g turkey mince
1 medium red onion, finely chopped
1 medium carrot, finely grated
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 Tbsp finely chopped rosemary leaves
¼ cup tomato paste
400g canned diced tomatoes
Sea-salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to season
¾ cup grated mozzarella

COTTAGE CHEESE SAUCE

750g cottage cheese
½ cup finely grated parmesan
1 free-range egg

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan-forced. Lightly grease a 2.5-litre (10-cup) ovenproof dish. Heat oil in a large, deep frying pan on high. Cook kale stems, turkey, onion, carrot, garlic and rosemary for 10 minutes or until browned. Add tomato paste and diced tomatoes. Cook for 2 minutes. Season.
STEP 2 Meanwhile, drop kale leaves into a large saucepan of boiling water for 30 seconds. Refresh in a bowl of iced water or under cold water. Drain well. Place in a clean tea towel and gently squeeze to remove any excess liquid.
STEP 3 For the cottage cheese sauce, whisk all ingredients in a large bowl until combined. Season.
STEP 4 Arrange half the kale leaves in a single layer in the dish. Top with half the turkey mixture and half the sauce. Repeat layers. Sprinkle with mozzarella.
STEP 5 Bake lasagne for 40 minutes or until top is golden. Stand for 10 minutes before serving.

COOK'S TIP

You can assemble then refrigerate the lasagne several hours ahead. Add 10 minutes to cooking time if baking from cold. Cover loosely with a sheet of baking paper or oiled foil if lasagne is overbrowning.

SEED AND NUT BARS

Preparation time 15 mins plus refrigeration time
Cooking time 10 mins
Makes 24 bars

½ cup natural almonds, chopped
½ cup walnuts, quartered
¼ cup white sesame seeds
¼ cup pepitas
¼ cup sunflower seeds
¾ cup crunchy peanut butter
⅔ cup rice malt syrup
2 cups puffed millet
2 Tbsp white chia seeds
2 Tbsp linseeds

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan-forced. Grease a 20cm x 30cm slice pan. Line base and sides with baking paper. Place almonds, walnuts, sesame seeds, pepitas and sunflower seeds on a large oven tray. Bake for 10 minutes or until lightly browned. Transfer to a large heatproof bowl.
STEP 2 Stir peanut butter and rice malt syrup in a small saucepan over low heat until combined. Add to nut mixture with puffed millet, chia seeds and linseeds. Stir to combine. Press firmly into pan. Refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight.
STEP 3 Remove from pan. Cut into bars.
OPTIONS For choc-chip bars, stir 50g chopped sugar-free dark chocolate into mixture and drizzle bars with 50g melted sugar-free dark chocolate. For coconut bars, omit pepitas and sunflower seeds, add ¾ cup shredded coconut to mixture and sprinkle bars with ¼ cup toasted shredded coconut.

BANANA OAT MUFFINS

Preparation time 15 mins plus cooling
Cooking time 25 mins
Serves 6

1½ cups rolled oats
½ cup wholemeal plain flour
1 tsp ground nutmeg
½ tsp bicarb soda
1 tsp baking powder
½ cup coarsely chopped walnuts
120g apple sauce
2 free-range eggs, lightly beaten
¼ cup milk
½ cup Greek-style yoghurt
¾ cup mashed ripe banana, plus 1 extra banana, cut into 12 slices
1½ Tbsp honey
2 tsp lemon juice
⅔ cup Greek-style yoghurt, extra

STEP 1 Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan. Lightly spray a six-hole (¾-cup, 180ml capacity) Texas muffin pan with oil spray. Line base and side with two overlapping strips of baking paper.
STEP 2 Reserve 1 tablespoon oats. In a food processor, process remaining oats until finely chopped but still retaining some texture. Combine chopped oats, flour, nutmeg, bicarb soda, baking powder and half the walnuts in a large bowl. Make a well in centre. Combine apple sauce, egg, milk, yoghurt, mashed banana and 1 tablespoon of honey in a jug. Pour into oat mixture. Stir until just combined. Spoon evenly into pan holes.
STEP 3 Combine sliced banana and lemon juice in a bowl. Place two banana slices on each muffin. Sprinkle with reserved oats and remaining walnuts.
STEP 4 Bake for 25 minutes or until muffins are golden and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Cool muffins in pan for 5 minutes before turning out and leaving top-side up on a wire rack to cool completely.
STEP 5 Drizzle remaining honey over top of muffins just before serving. Serve with extra yoghurt. ■

Photography © Are Media www.contentshop.com.au

BANANA OAT MUFFINS
Recipe opposite

sweet DREAMS

Sleep deep and wake up with a spring in your step by cosying up to nature!

In our fast-paced, always-on world, a good night's sleep is more precious than ever. While technology and stress often conspire to rob us of rest, nature offers gentle, time-honoured remedies that can help us drift off peacefully. Certain botanicals can transform our bedrooms into restful sanctuaries. Whether it's the calming scent of lavender or the soothing ritual of a bedtime herbal tea, embracing the power of plants can help you sleep more deeply and wake up refreshed.

Add potted or freshly cut lavender to your bedroom for its sleep-promoting properties.

Fill small fabric bags with dried lavender, hops or rose petals and tuck them under your pillow.

Hit the lavender *snooze button*

The heavenly scent of lavender is traditionally used in aromatherapy to reduce stress levels and relax your mind into sleep mode. A study published in the journal Chronobiology International *found it increases the "percentage of deep or slow-wave sleep" and decreases rapid-eye movement sleep. It concludes that "lavender serves as a mild sedative and has practical applications as a ... method for promoting sleep". So, put fresh sprigs in a vase when lavender's in flower, or tuck lavender sachets next to your pillow when it's not.*

Set up an oil diffuser with a blend of lavender, chamomile and sandalwood essential oils 30 minutes before bedtime.

Sip a cup of chamomile, lemon balm or passionflower tea an hour before bed.

Try a *nightcap*

A cup of herbal tea – chamomile, lemon balm or ashwagandha – before you head off to bed has long been a popular way to get a restful sleep. Or try aromatherapy with essential oils from plants such as jasmine, chamomile, sandalwood, valerian and lavender.
NOTE Always check with your doctor before taking herbal teas or supplements, as they may not be compatible with existing medication, or if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. ■

> “CHAMOMILE AND SPEARMINT TEA IS MY GO-TO IN THE EVENING – IT SETTLES MY STOMACH AND MY MIND.”
>
> **MEGAN OSBORNE, EDITOR**

Photography Adobe Stock

SEE THEM ONLINE

BHGTV FAVOURITES

To find these easy projects plus recipes, advice and much more, scan the QR code or visit **bhg.com.au**.

JULIET LOVE

Upcycle a plain glass vase and turn it into a trendy handled ceramic jug.

ADAM DOVILE

Turn a shed into a home office to make the most of unused backyard space.

CHARLIE ALBONE

Plant leafy layers to bring a shady, unloved patch of garden back to life.

GRAHAM ROSS

Build raised garden beds – they're a great option for reducing back strain.

Star-crossed SLEEP

How the moon can impact your sleep, according to science and the stars.

Words NATASHA WEBER

Is the moon stealing your slumber?

You're snuggled up in bed with the doona pulled to your chin and your phone on silent, sipping a warm cup of chamomile tea. It's the perfect set-up for a good night's sleep, but instead of drifting off into dreamland, you find yourself tossing and turning, and your mind racing. Or maybe you manage to doze off, only to wake in the middle of the night, staring at the ceiling, unable to fall back to that blissful slumber.

Stress? Hormones? Too much screen time? Possibly. But another factor might be at play: the moon, glowing luminously outside your window, especially noticeable on those restless nights. If you've ever suspected that the lunar phases seem to meddle with your sleep patterns, you're not alone.

Many people report trouble falling asleep or waking up repeatedly around the full moon. And while some brush it off as superstition or woo-woo, a growing body of scientific evidence shows that lunar cycles can indeed affect sleep. So, the next time you find yourself counting sheep, take a peek outside. The answer to your sleep woes might just be written in the stars.

The science behind sleeplessness during a full moon

It turns out there's solid science behind the idea that the moon can interfere with sleep. Researchers at the University of Basel found that during the full moon, people took longer to fall asleep, slept for about 20 minutes less overall, and had a noticeable drop in deep sleep. Their melatonin levels (the hormone that helps regulate sleep) were also lower. What's striking is that the study was conducted in a controlled sleep lab, where participants had no exposure to moonlight, and no clocks or cues about the time or moon phase. Harvard Health reported another study with similar findings.

The research monitored sleep patterns in urban and rural communities, along with data from hundreds of US college students. Across all groups, sleep was shorter and more disrupted in the nights leading up to a full moon. Participants took between 30 and 80 minutes longer to fall asleep and lost up to 90 minutes of total sleep. What does this tell us? Scientists believe we may have an internal clock called a 'circalunar rhythm' that syncs with the moon and affects our sleep.

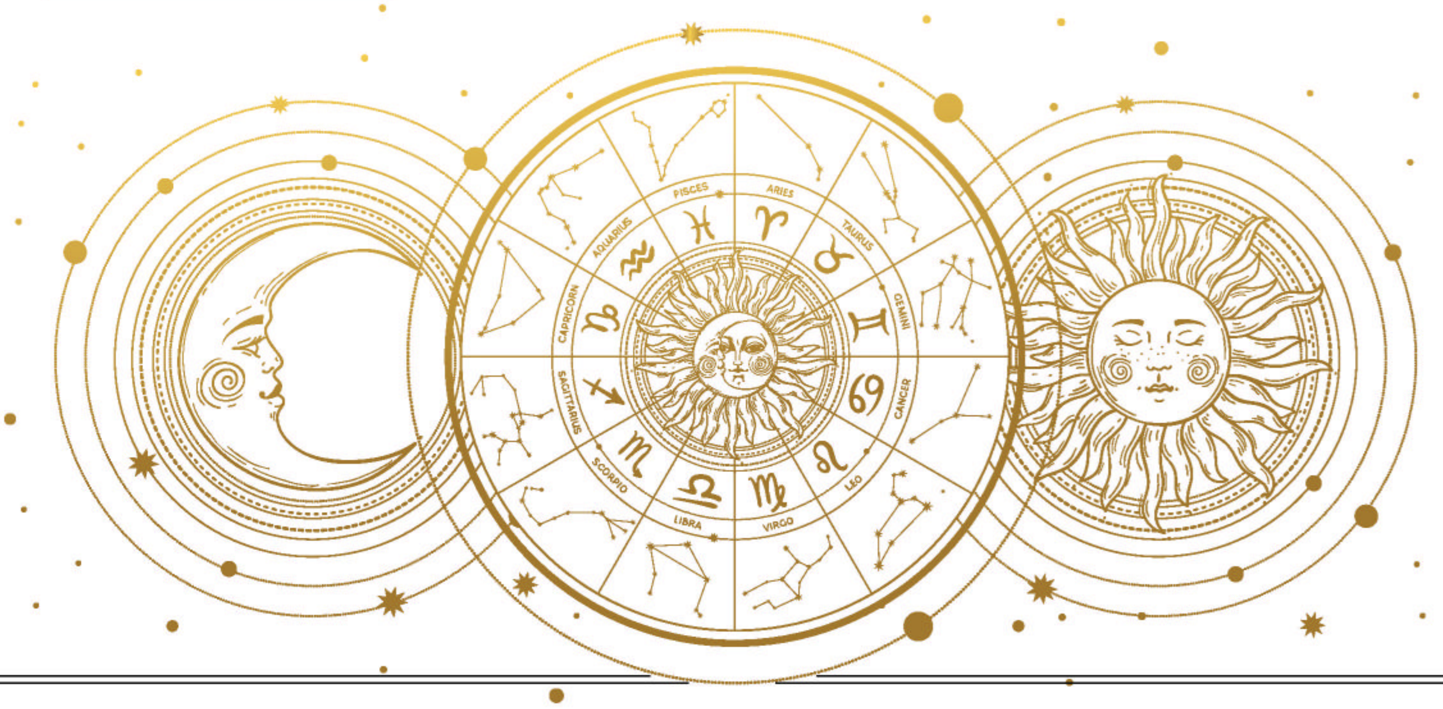
When the moon speaks, wildlife listens

It's not just humans that feel the moon's pull. Animals also respond to it, especially around the full moon when nights are brightest. A study published in the *Journal of Animal Ecology* found that prey animals are less active on full moon nights, and predators don't hunt as often. Even marine life isn't immune to the moon, with coral synchronising their spawning to the lunar cycle. And if your furry friend seems a little restless or anxious on those bright moonlit nights, science suggests that the full moon could be to blame.

Do plants respond to moonlight?

We tend to think of plants as sun worshippers, but they may also be attuned to another celestial body: the moon. Recent scientific research suggests that even low levels of moonlight can influence seed germination, flowering and the growth cycles of plants. If you'd like to garden according to the phases of the moon, turn to p158 for Milton Black's moon guide.

> The moon has been associated with sleep and dreams in many cultures. In Greek mythology, Selene, the goddess of the moon, was believed to send dreams to mortals as they slept.



The moon's astrological influence

The study of astrology tells us that the moon represents our emotional compass, guiding us through the inner tides of our subconscious. When the moon is full, it acts like a cosmic spotlight, illuminating the feelings and truths we often keep hidden. It's no wonder that sleep can seem elusive during this lunar phase as vivid dreams, sudden realisations and buried emotions rise to the surface.

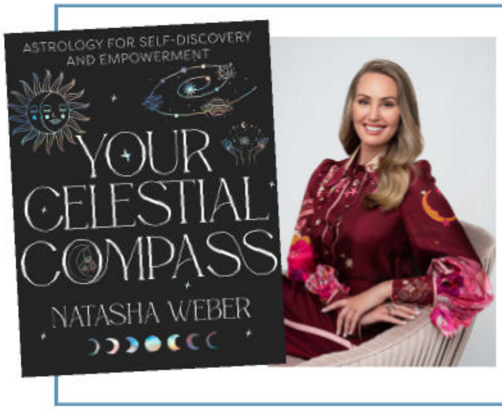
The full moon's impact on our sleep can vary depending on its zodiac sign. Full moons in Water signs (Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces) amplify emotions, making it harder to find peace and slip into slumber. Fiery full moons in Aries, Leo, or Sagittarius ignite passion and drive, urging us to tackle our to-do lists, even at 2am. Air sign full moons (Gemini, Libra, Aquarius) unleash the monkey mind, challenging us to quiet mental chatter. On the other hand, full moons in Earth signs (Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn) offer emotional stability and groundedness, which can be harnessed to create a calming bedtime routine that invites restful sleep.

In a nocturnal nutshell

So, if you find yourself wide awake at 3.17am during a full moon, know that you're not alone. The moon's influence on our sleep is both a mystical and scientific phenomenon, connecting us to the rhythms of nature. By understanding more about how it affects our slumber through science and the ancient wisdom of the stars, we can work with the lunar cycle to improve the quality and duration of our sleep.

DID YOU KNOW?

In astrology, supermoons, which occur when the moon is closest to the Earth, can amplify sleep disruptions due to increased gravitational pull and brightness. Similarly, lunar eclipses, known for their transformative energy, intensify emotions and vivid dreams, which can lead to restless nights.


ASTROLOGY FOR SELF-DISCOVERY AND EMPOWERMENT
YOUR CELESTIAL COMPASS
NATASHA WEBER

YOUR CELESTIAL COMPASS

Natasha Weber is an astrologer who works on Seven's *The Morning Show* as well as *Marie Claire* Australia. She is a senior researcher with the Australian Academy of Astrology & Cosmobiology and a member of the American Federation of Astrologers. Scan the QR code to buy her book *Your Celestial Compass* (Penguin Random House, $36.99), or go to **astrotash.com**.

Illustrations Adobe Stock

Originating from the Latin word *lunaticus*, meaning moonstruck, the term 'lunatic' reflects ancient beliefs that the moon influenced human behaviour and mental states. ■

Milton Black
Astrologer

MOON guide

Garden according to the phases of the moon with Milton Black.

CLIMBING GUINEA FLOWER

Milton's tips for Leo season

(July 23 to August 22)

The Leo sign is ruled by the Sun, which is associated with splendour, magnificence and a vibrant life. In addition, Leos are connected with gold, orange, yellow and sunny colours and warm tones. Leos should always plant for colour, such as the native hibiscus (*H. heterophyllus*), yellow buttons, climbing guinea flower, banksia, wattle, heart-leaf flame pea, roses and straw flowers.

Leos also like shade trees, to spend time relaxing under during hot seasons. This can be a Japanese maple, magnolia or forest pansy.

Talking food, Leos love to experiment with food, especially Asian and Mediterranean dishes and seafoods. And being lions, those carnivorous Leos like nothing better than a nice juicy steak or lamb fillet!

CAPRICORN
SAGITTARIUS
SCORPIO
LIBRA
VIRGO
GEMINI
TAURUS
ARIES
PISCES
AQUARIUS

ZODIAC SIGNS

The 12 signs of the zodiac are divided into four groups – fire, air, earth and water.

Fire signs
Aries and **Sagittarius** are in harmony with all fruit. **Leo** is in harmony with nuts and all seed-producing crops.

Earth signs
Capricorn and **Taurus** are in harmony with all root vegetables that produce crops below the ground, including garlic. **Virgo** is in harmony with all herbs.

Air signs
Libra, **Aquarius** and **Gemini** are in harmony with plants that produce flowers and perfumes.

Water signs
Cancer, **Scorpio** and **Pisces** are in harmony with above-ground crops, including trees, shrubs, lawns, and leafy, juicy and fleshy vegetables.

- ♌ Leo
- ♍ Virgo
- ♎ Libra
- ♏ Scorpio
- ♐ Sagittarius
- ♑ Capricorn
- ♒ Aquarius
- ♓ Pisces
- ♈ Aries
- ♉ Taurus
- ♊ Gemini
- ♋ Cancer

AUGUST 2025

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
					1 Moon enters Scorpio 3.24am First Quarter Moon 10.41pm	**2** ♏
3 Moon enters Sagittarius 4.00pm	**4** ♐	**5** ♐	**6** Moon enters Capricorn 3.04am	**7** ♑	**8** Moon enters Aquarius 11.17am	**9** Full Moon in Aquarius 5.54pm
10 Moon enters Pisces 4.50pm	**11** ♓	**12** Moon enters Aries 8.32pm	**13** ♈	**14** Moon enters Taurus 11.21pm	**15** ♉	**16** Last Quarter Moon in Taurus 5.12pm
17 Moon enters Gemini 2.00am	**18** ♊	**19** Moon enters Cancer 5.05am	**20** ♋	**21** Moon enters Leo 9.16am	**22** ♌	**23** Moon enters Virgo 6.33am New Moon 4.06pm
24 ♍	**25** ♍	**26** Moon enters Libra 12.08am	**27** ♎	**28** Moon enters Scorpio 11.27am	**29** ♏	**30** ♏
31 Moon enters Sagittarius 12.04am First Quarter Moon 2.25pm						

1 Solid number means plant all **ABOVE**-ground crops during the moon's **WAXING** cycle.

1 Hollow number means plant all **BELOW**-ground crops during the moon's **WANING** cycle.

How to use the calendar

🟨 **Best days**

🟥 **Second-best days**

On these days, thin out seed boxes, sow seeds and plant seedlings that produce their crop above the ground.

These include peas, beans, corn, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, brussels sprouts, eggplant, lettuce, celery, silverbeet, spinach, endive, Chinese cabbage, tomato, cucumber, asparagus crowns, artichoke, marrow, pumpkin, capsicum, melon, zucchini, chicory, sprouts, rhubarb and herbs (except garlic).

You can also plant out flowering shrubs, annuals, flowers (not bulbs), cactus, tree ferns, flax, passionfruit vines and kiwifruit.

Plant fruit trees and trees that produce edible nuts, such as almond, macadamia, pecan and walnut. Grapes and banana can also be planted.

Take cuttings from established trees and shrubs, and propagate. This is also a good time for planting trees and climbers, and sowing new lawns.

🟩 **Best days**

🟫 **Second-best days**

On these days, sow seeds and plant seedlings that grow their crops below ground, such as carrot, parsnip, radish, beetroot, onion, leek, swede, turnip, sweet potato, seed potato, yam, cassava, garlic and ginger.

This is a good time to plant flowering bulbs or bulbs for propagation and development rather than flowers. Also, plant bare-rooted trees to develop root growth, and refurbish established lawns.

▨ A favourable time for transplanting all types of established trees, shrubs, ferns and bulbs.

☐ Weed and lightly feed. Water with seaweed-type products only.

🟪 Destroy or spray weeds, pests and noxious growth. Cut lawns, do heavy pruning and clear rubbish – don't plant or transplant anything.

Prepare soil and fertilise garden beds for future planting; spread and make compost. Feed all established plants, shrubs and lawns, then water in. This is the best time for dethatching or coring lawns.

🟦 Do not plant or transplant anything, as the moon is adversely aspected with the sun.

Times are in Australian Eastern Standard Time, AEST. This applies to NSW, the ACT, Qld, Vic and Tas. For SA and NT, deduct half an hour. For WA, deduct two hours. During Daylight Saving Time, add 1 hour. **Any questions?** Email milton@miltonblack.com.au ■

Photography Adobe Stock; illustration Getty Images

Jenny Dillon
Garden Editor

In your GARDEN

Venture out to see how the buds of native wildflowers are forming!

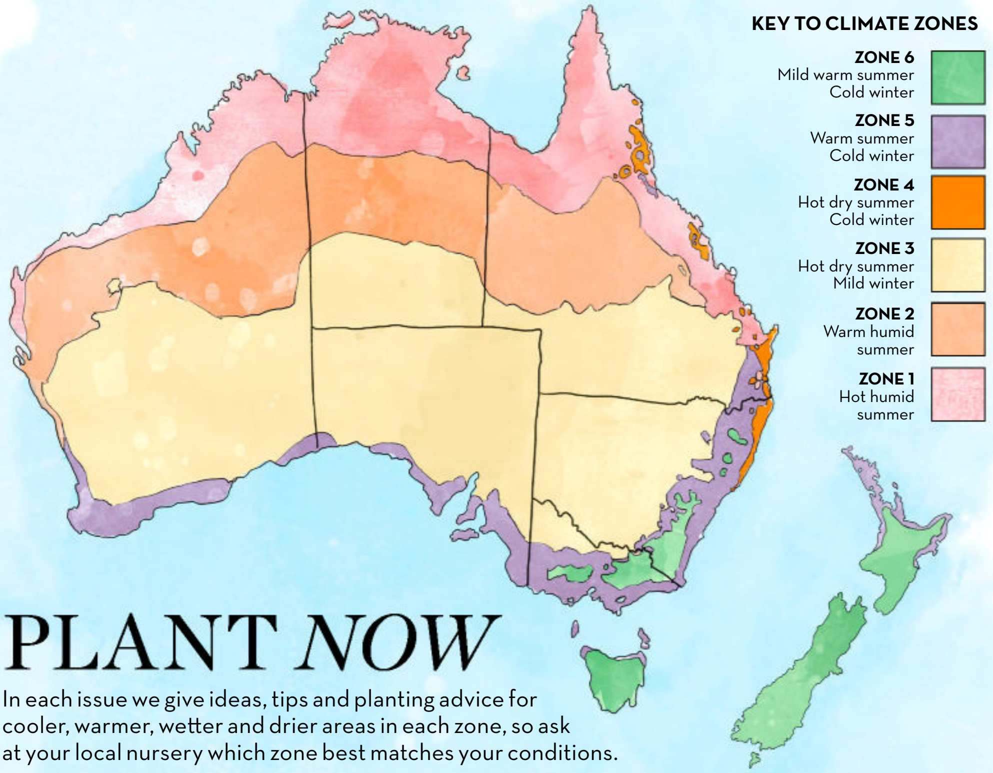
SEASON SPECIALS

Cooler weather brings out some very cool flowers.

PRETTY POP-UP
The shade-loving native violet looks vibrant in winter.

COLOUR SPLASH
Polyanthus gives your winter garden colour and a bit of cheek!

POTTED POWER
Brighten up your indoors or a balcony with a zygocactus in a pot.



KEY TO CLIMATE ZONES

ZONE 6 Mild warm summer Cold winter 🟩
ZONE 5 Warm summer Cold winter 🟪
ZONE 4 Hot dry summer Cold winter 🟧
ZONE 3 Hot dry summer Mild winter 🟨
ZONE 2 Warm humid summer 🟧
ZONE 1 Hot humid summer 🟥

PLANT *NOW*

In each issue we give ideas, tips and planting advice for cooler, warmer, wetter and drier areas in each zone, so ask at your local nursery which zone best matches your conditions.

FLOWERS

ALL ZONES Aster, honesty, tuberous begonia, petunia and rudbeckia (top left).
ZONES 1-3 Ageratum, arctotis, bedding begonia, Californian poppy, celosia, cosmos, dahlia, gazania, gerbera, African marigold, phlox, portulaca (bottom left), salvia, sunflower and zinnia.
ZONES 4-6 Statice and delphinium.

VEGETABLES

ALL ZONES Beetroot, broccoli, cabbage, mustard (top left), onion, parsnip and peas.
ZONES 1-3 Beans, capsicum, carrot, cucumber (bottom left), marrow, potato, pumpkin, rhubarb crowns, squash, sweet corn and tomato.
ZONE 4-6 Artichoke suckers, cress and Chinese cabbage.

Photography Tony Fawcett, Adobe Stock, Canva

> Let us live like flowers, wild and beautiful and drenched in sun.
>
> ELLEN EVERETT, POET/AUTHOR

CYMBIDIUM ORCHIDS

IN THE ROUND

HAVING A BALL

Inject spherical interest into a garden corner with a trio of concrete balls of various sizes, like these ones spotted at this year's Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show. You'll find variations on the sphere theme at garden feature suppliers. Or make your own! Use quick-dry concrete and make moulds from plastic basketballs or beachballs from discount stores.

STRIKINGLY COLOURFUL BOUGAINVILLEA!

GARDEN *SECRETS*

Maintain your home's privacy with fast-growing plants.

ORANGE JESSAMINE

1

GOING UP

There are plenty of quick-grow plants you can use to keep stickybeaks at bay. Proven tall-growers include pencil pines and native lilly pilly varieties.

2

SCREEN STARS

For screening plants up to 3–5 metres, consider *Pittosporum* 'Wonder Screen', *Callistemon viminalis* 'Slim', hardy *Photinia robusta* or orange jessamine.

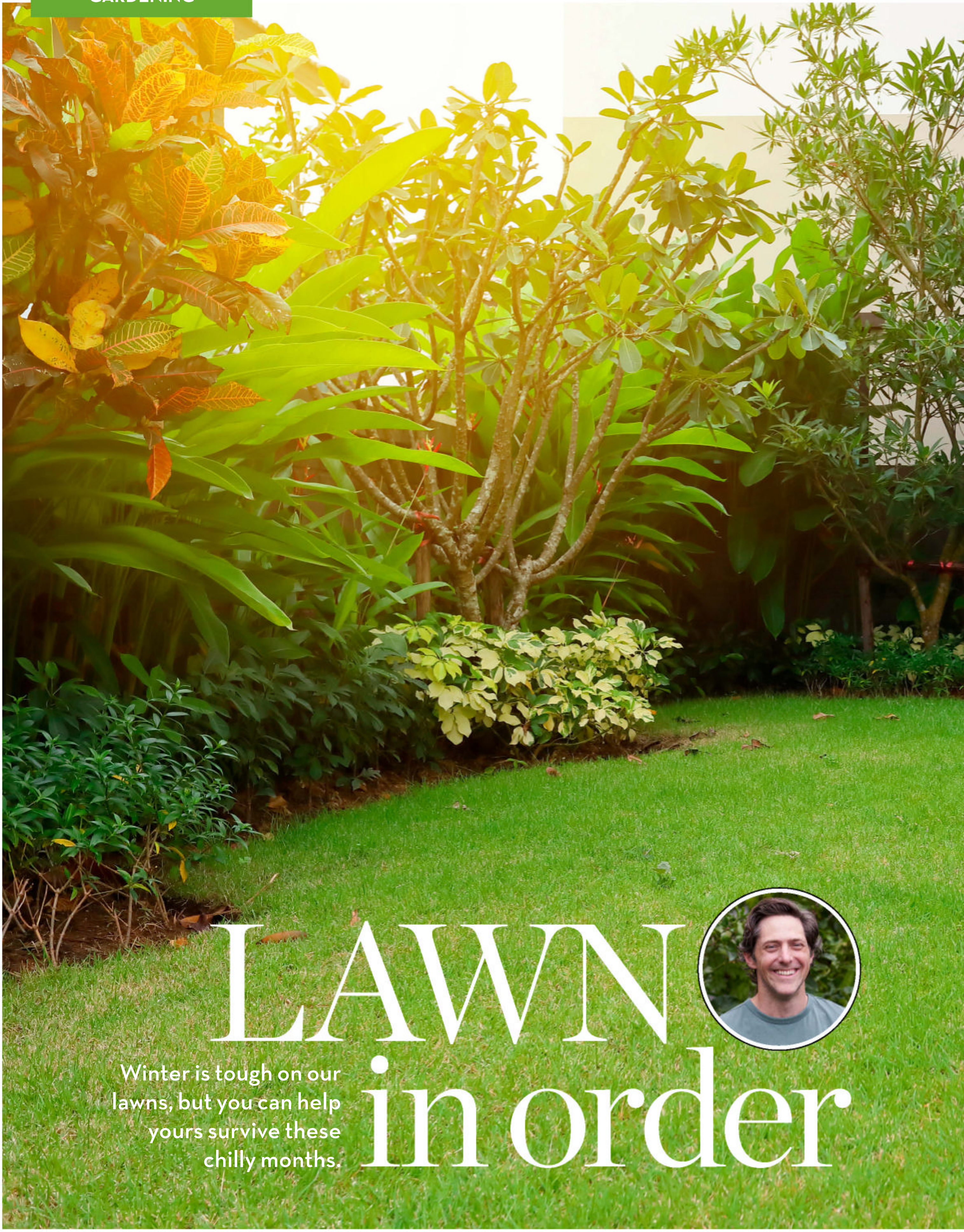
3

CREEP & CLIMB

Put a sturdy trellis atop a fence as a support for screening beauties such as native hardenbergia, white star jasmine, twining snake vine and vibrant bougainvilleas.

GARDENING ADVICE

◆ **CHECK** azaleas for petal blight (mushy brown petals) and spray with a fungicide if present. ◆ **FERTILISE** early spring bulbs that have finished flowering, but resist the urge to cut back foliage until it has completely died down. ◆ **PULL OUT** or spray annual weeds as they appear to stop them becoming established. ◆ **PLANT** pawpaw in subtropical zones for lush fruit for years to come. ◆ **CHECK** for citrus gall wasp (ugly swellings on stems). Cut off with a sharp knife and destroy. ■



LAWN in order

Winter is tough on our lawns, but you can help yours survive these chilly months.

SEEN ON BHG TV
FRIDAYS 7.00

POOR DRAINAGE
BARE PATCHES
WEEDS
FROST

Photography Adobe Stock

As the winter sun sits lower in the sky, shadows lengthen, rainwater lingers in puddles and your once lush and lovely lawn can suffer. Think bare patches and colour fading from its rich, summer verdancy to a dull yellow. What you're seeing are the superficial effects of winter weather on your lawn, but the real damage is happening underground. Rainy days and the lack of warmth to help excess moisture evaporate mean roots can drown and your lawn can die. BHG TV's Charlie Albone shares his advice to help your lawn survive and thrive against the elements this season.

Top tips from Charlie

BHG If you're in an area where it rains a lot in winter, is drainage an issue when you don't get enough sun to dry out the lawn?
CA Poor drainage is responsible for so many plant deaths! Not many plants can withstand having soggy roots, so it is worthwhile putting in the effort and making sure your garden can withstand long periods of rain as well as shorter, often torrential periods, too. This is much easier to do when starting a new garden but not impossible in an existing space either.

BHG The lack of enough sun means more shade, leading to bare patches that attract weeds. What can you do to stop this?
CA Aerating bare patches with a fork and filling the holes with sand is a great way to help dry these patches out. Be diligent with removing emerging weeds. Then lift turf stolons (those horizontal stems that grow above the ground) from stronger parts of your lawn and plant them in the bare patches.

BHG What effects do frosts or heavy morning dew have on your lawn and especially the roots?
CA Most areas that receive frosts grow cool-season grasses that are developed to withstand any issues from cold ground. You will lose colour but this will return when the weather warms up again. If the lack of colour bothers you there are products that turn your grass green again.

BHG Even though it's cold, can the extra moisture from rain, frost and dew cause any lawn diseases?
CA Lawn hates to be waterlogged – rot is the biggest issue in cold weather. Fix the drainage and you won't have a problem. ■

CHARLIE ALBONE
Join me as I solve a garden problem where drainage issues, combined with shade and sloping ground, are making it impossible for a healthy lawn to grow. See it on BHGTV, Friday, July 11, 7pm on Channel 7. For more garden tips, go to **BHG.COM.AU**

better gardening

[NEWS, PRODUCTS AND TRENDS]

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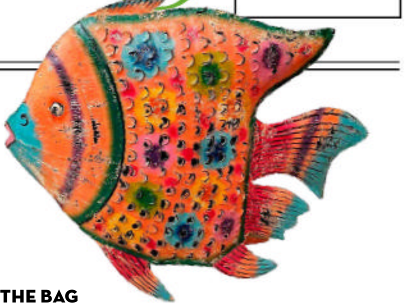
Blushing beauty

From spring right through to the first frosts of winter, *Rosa* Showpiece™ 'Blush' is guaranteed to enchant with its large soft pink blooms, glorious old-world look and perfume. Disease resistant and low maintenance once established, it grows up to one metre. It performs best with regular fertilising and an annual clip back by a third in winter. Released by Anthony Tesselaar Plants (**tesselaar.com**) under various labels.



IN THE BAG

A FLASH FISH

Give your outdoors an aquatic slant with this large, hand-painted metal lantern. Hang it up or sit it on the ground or a table, then place a candle or light inside. It's sure to turn heads; $395, from Aussie Heatwave Fireplaces, **aussieheatwave.com.au/decor**.

ECO WISE

Simple permaculture

Want to garden more organically but don't quite know how? *Everyday Permaculture: Sustainable Living for Every Space* by Anna Matilda, aka 'The Urban Nanna', (Hardie Grant, $42.99) is for you. Anna shares her simple ploys for gardening, from traditional skills to zero-waste principles. Scan the code above to buy a copy.

ANNA MATILDA
'The Urban Nanna'
Everyday Permaculture
Sustainable Living for Every Space

WHAT'S ON?

KISSES OF COLOUR

The laidback WA town of Nannup lights up with 10,000-plus tulips for its annual Flower and Garden Festival, on August 8–17. Taking in two weekends, it showcases the sensual beauty of tulips while presenting displays, celebrity gardeners, talks, market stalls and open gardens. And there's entertainment and music aplenty. You'll find the fun in the heart of WA's South West, just a 50-minute drive from Margaret River. More details at **nannupgardens.org.au**. ■

Prices are approximate and a guide only. Due to the printing process, colour reproduction is a guide only.

WIN!

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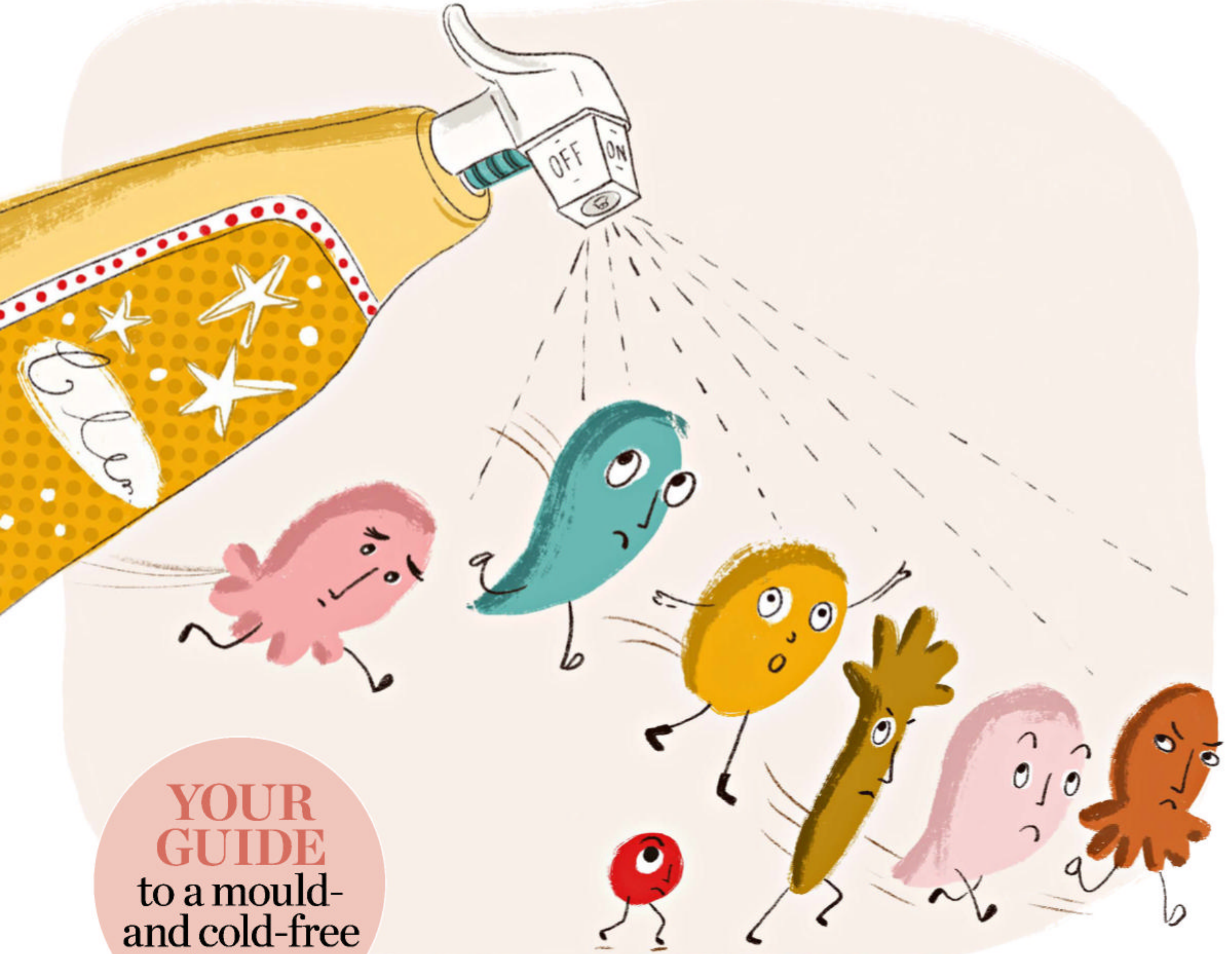

YOUR GUIDE to a mould- and cold-free home

Winter wellness

Avoid catching the sniffles or sniffing out mould! Whether they're due to the wet and chilly weather and washing hanging indoors or some avoidable home habits, here's how to combat common winter woes.

Words ALYSSA SHAFFER + MEGAN OSBORNE *Illustrations* TRINA DALZIEL

As the temperature drops and we spend more time indoors, our homes can become breeding grounds for germs and, if we're not careful, pesky mould and mildew. But keeping your sanctuary healthy doesn't require an obsession, just a smart, targeted approach. This winter, refine your cleaning routine to minimise unwanted microscopic guests and help your family stay happy and well through cold and flu season.

7 cleaning tips to beat bugs

Even the tidiest homes can harbour hidden germ hotspots. Here are seven common cleaning oversights and simple fixes to help keep your family healthy.

1 SPONGE SMARTS

YOUR KITCHEN'S GERMIEST CULPRIT

The fault

Using the same sponge for dishes and benchtops. Research shows sponges are prime breeding grounds for bacteria like salmonella, campylobacter and E. coli, potentially contaminating your kitchen surfaces. It's even worse if you're cleaning surfaces that have been touched by raw meat, seafood, poultry or eggs.

The fix

Separate and sanitise Consider using paper towels for raw food spills. While not as eco-friendly, it can be a safer option. If you do use a cloth, wash it in hot water immediately after use.

Dishwasher dive Pop your sponge into the dishwasher, making sure it has a drying setting, to kill pathogens.

Replace regularly Swap out your kitchen sponges every 2-3 weeks, or sooner if they develop an odour.

2 DISINFECTING DILEMMA

BEYOND SOAP AND WATER

The fault

Relying solely on soap and water. While it's good for removing dirt, soap alone won't eradicate all bacteria and viruses.

The fix

Double duty After cleaning surfaces with soap and water, follow up with a disinfectant spray or wipe (eg, a bleach solution or ammonia-based cleaner).

Dwell time is key Allow disinfectants to sit for a few minutes as per product instructions before wiping. This gives them time to work effectively.

IMPORTANT SAFETY PRECAUTION

Never mix chlorine bleach and ammonia – toxic fumes can result! Most commercial disinfectants contain either bleach or ammonia, so make sure you don't mix them together.

3 SINK SAVVY

DON'T FORGET THE BASIN

The fault
Cleaning dishes but neglecting the sink itself. Left unloved, the sink can become one of the ickiest spots in a kitchen as either a breeding ground for bacteria or a source of cross-contamination.

The fix
Post-prep disinfection Whenever you use your sink in the process of handling raw meat or poultry, assume that bacteria will have collected in the drain. To tackle this, spray disinfectant thoroughly into the sink and drain.
Drain-basket detail Load the drain catcher into the dishwasher with your other dishes for a hot water sanitise.

4 FRIDGE FINESSE

BEYOND THE DOOR

The fault
Wiping down the exterior of the fridge but skipping the inside. Despite the cold temperatures, refrigerators can harbour bacteria, yeast and mould, especially in meat drawers and vegie compartments.

The fix
Deep clean Use a bicarb soda and water solution or a non-abrasive all-purpose cleaner to scrub the interior.
Temperature check Always keep your fridge at 4°C or lower to slow bacterial growth.
Prevent leaks Store raw meat and poultry on the bottom shelf. This prevents drips and cross-contamination onto other foods.

5 SHOWERHEAD SPRUCING

MORE THAN JUST THE TILES

The fault
Cleaning your shower but overlooking the showerhead. Research has found that water from contaminated showerheads could spread bacteria into the lungs. While this isn't a concern for healthy individuals, those who are immunocompromised may be at higher risk (especially those with respiratory conditions).

The fix
Consistent cleaning Clean your showerhead regularly to prevent grime build-up, keep the nozzles clear and reduce potential bacterial spread.

6 FRESH AIRFLOW

OPEN UP WHEN CLEANING

The fault
Keeping windows closed while cleaning. Many cleaning products release volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that can cause eye irritation, coughing and headaches, especially for those with allergies.

The fix
Ventilate Crack a window or keep a door open to allow fresh air circulation.
Eco-friendly alternatives Consider using less harsh chemicals such as vinegar, bicarb soda and lemon juice.
Spray smart Opt for pump sprays or non-aerosol alternatives to reduce airborne chemicals.

7 DUST RIGHT

DAMP IS BEST

The fault
Using a dry cloth or feather duster. These methods simply move dust and allergens around rather than trapping them.

The fix
Damp trap While it might seem counterintuitive to avoid mould, use a damp towel or microfibre cloth to trap and lock in dust. Just don't leave it too wet to avoid moisture sticking around!
Dehumidify Did you know dust mites actually thrive in humid environments? Consider a dehumidifier to help reduce dust mite levels.

WINTER CLEAN-UP

Banish mould *and* mildew

Increased indoor moisture in winter often creates ideal conditions for mould and mildew. These fungi can seriously impact indoor air quality and your family's health, particularly for infants, children, the elderly and those with respiratory conditions.

Understanding the threat

Mould and mildew thrive in moisture. They can start to grow on surfaces such as wood, plasterboard, carpets and fabrics within 24–48 hours of dampness, eventually releasing spores that can cause respiratory problems and irritation.

Key areas to check:

- Damp basements or crawl spaces
- Areas with previous water damage
- Surfaces including wood, ceiling tiles, wallpaper, carpets and insulation

Cleaning strategies: Tackling existing growths

Don't let mould linger. Act quickly with these targeted cleaning methods.

Outdoor fabric

Move outside Take items outdoors to prevent indoor spore spread.

Brush off Thoroughly brush away loose mildew.

Launder For bleach-safe fabric, wash with chlorine bleach and hot water. For delicate items, soak in oxygen bleach and hot water for 30 minutes, then wash.

Sun dry Dry in direct sunlight if possible.

Indoor fabric and upholstery

Vacuum first Start by vacuuming the affected area. Dispose of the bag or clean the canister outside immediately. Use a HEPA filter vacuum where possible.

Spot clean Opt for a fabric cleaner suitable for your type of upholstery and follow instructions. Alternatively, try mixing equal parts water and white vinegar. Spray lightly and spot clean.

Rinse and dry Sponge with cold water, blot and dry completely with a fan or cool hair dryer.

> “WHEN TACKLING DUST, MOULD AND MILDEW, IT'S ADVISABLE TO WEAR A FACE MASK TO AVOID INHALING ANY NASTY PATHOGENS.”

Mildew-stained carpets

Vacuum Thoroughly vacuum the carpet, then dispose of the bag or clean the canister outdoors.

Cleaning solution Mix together 1 tablespoon of liquid laundry soap with 2 cups cool water. Or use a nifty spot cleaner.

Apply and dry Apply suds to the stain with a damp cloth, sponging lightly. Repeat until the stain is gone, then rinse and dry completely.

SCAN ME
Scan to shop our top upholstery cleaners.

Wood furniture

Vacuum first Vacuum with a soft brush to remove loose spores. Dispose of the bag or clean the canister outdoors.

Mild solution Mix equal parts water and white vinegar, or water and mild dish soap. Perform a spot test in a hidden area, then gently scrub mouldy areas.

Wipe and polish Wipe in direction of wood grain. Rinse with a damp cloth, let dry, then polish or seal if required.

Shower curtains

Wash hot Wash with half a cup of liquid disinfectant and 4 litres of hot water.

Rinse (optional) Rinse with a mix of 1 cup of lemon juice and 1 cup of salt to 4 litres hot water.

Laundry If your curtain can be laundered, wash with detergent and bleach. Rinse with water.

Shower screens and bathroom tiles

Vinegar An 80% vinegar solution (mix white vinegar and water in a 4:1 ratio) can be a great way to wipe away mould. Rinse and then dry with a cloth.

Bicarb soda Bring out the big guns with bicarb and add 2 tablespoons into your vinegar solution. Spray onto problem areas, let it sit, then scrub. Rinse and dry.

Grout cleaner When it comes to cleaning grout, consistency is key to avoid build-up. Our readers love the Aldi Green Action Eucalyptus Oil Multi-Purpose Cleaner. It's got rave reviews – even from a professional cleaner!

Prevention: Stop mould and mildew before it starts

Proactive measures are your best defence against these fungi.

In the bathroom

Ventilate Use an exhaust fan for good airflow.

Dry towels Spread towels out to dry faster, or invest in heated towel rails.

Clear spaces Minimise items in the shower for easier cleaning and better air circulation.

Wipe down Squeegee or wipe down the shower after its last daily use.

Curtain choice Choose shower curtains that are removable and dry and clean easily.

Throughout the house

Reduce moisture Use dehumidifiers, fans and open windows, especially during humid periods.

Fix leaks Repair any plumbing leaks immediately.

Prevent rain ingress Regularly check for and prevent rainwater seepage into your home.

Fabric care Routinely clean and keep all household fabrics dry.

Dry storage Store items in dry, well-ventilated areas.

BAKING Soda

> “KEEP YOUR HOME CLEAN USING ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS SUCH AS SALT, VINEGAR, LEMON JUICE AND BICARB SODA.”

CLEAN, DISINFECT OR TOSS?

A quick guide

Knowing when to clean, disinfect or simply replace items is crucial for a healthy home.

Clean (with soap and hot water or diluted cleaners)

- Pet bowls – daily
- Toothbrush holder – weekly
- Coffee maker and reservoir – weekly
- Clothes hamper/laundry basket – monthly
- Mattress protector – monthly
- Pillows – quarterly
- Quilts – half-yearly

Disinfect (aim for a couple of times a week)

- Oven knobs
- Microwave buttons
- Refrigerator handles
- Kitchen counters
- Doorknobs (especially front door and bathrooms)
- Light switches
- Personal tech – mobile phones, keyboards, tablets, TV remotes

Toss (replace when they develop an unfixable smell or are worn)

- Kitchen sponge – every 2–3 weeks (depending on usage)
- Toilet bowl brush – every 3–6 months (depending on usage and with regular cleaning)
- Vacuum filters – following manufacturer's instructions

If mould and mildew are extensive, consider calling a professional cleaning or disposal service. Your family's health is always the top priority! ■

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY • CHILDREN'S BIRTHDAY CAKE BOOK •
XII I II III IIII V VI VII VIII IX X XI

THE AUSTRALIAN Women's Weekly

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Smart Slumber

Try these simple tips and tricks to improve your sleep.

Words ANNIE MILLAR

A restful night's sleep plays a key role in your health and wellbeing. It can impact everything from how you think and perform to your emotional resilience. Check out the following tips and products, and hopefully you'll be slipping into dreamland faster, deeper and better than ever.

PLAN FOR SLEEP

Sleeping well is as important as eating well, and it all starts with forming good habits. Here are six ways you can prep your mind and body for bedtime.

1

Stick to a regular sleep schedule and aim for 7-9 hours per night.

2

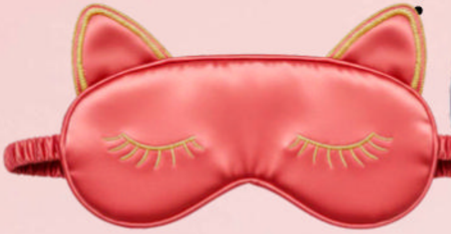
DO 30 MINUTES of moderate to intense physical exercise each day.

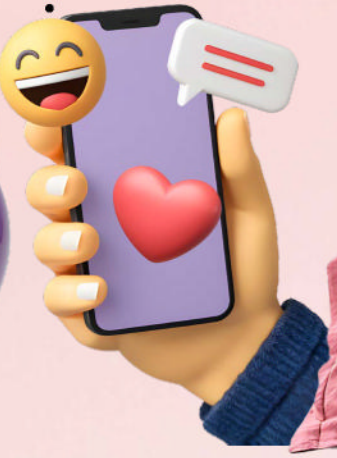
3

Avoid screen time for at least 1 hour before bed.

4

Create a **restful** and **relaxing** environment in your bedroom.





Photography Adobe Stock. Content is informational only and not professional advice. Prices are approximate and a guide only.

5

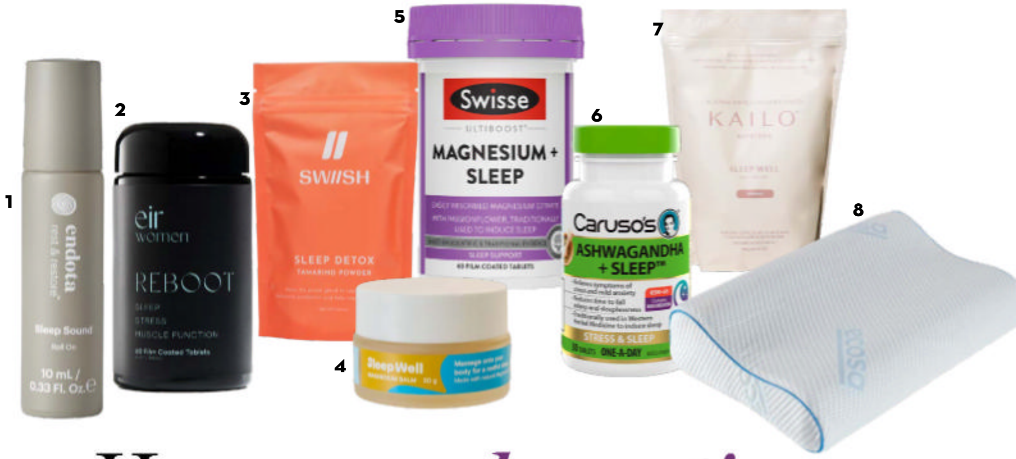
Don't go to bed hungry or feeling too full from overeating.

6

Stop drinking coffee and alcohol 2-3 hours before bedtime.

TOP TIP

Overheating can disturb your sleep. Keep an extra layer handy to pull up only if necessary.



Here comes *dream time*

You could try these products to enhance the quality of your sleep, but always read the label and follow directions for use.

1. Endota Rest & Restore Sleep Sound Roll-On, $30. Unwind with soothing chamomile, calming lavender and sleep-promoting valerian by applying this to the inside of your wrists, back of your neck and soles of your feet.

2. Eir Women Reboot, $65. This mix of plant extracts, magnesium and zinc, taken with dinner, may help reduce the time it takes you to fall asleep and improve your sleep quality.

3. Swiish Sleep Detox Tamarind Powder, $59.95. This antioxidant-rich powder is claimed to support melatonin and serotonin production, helping regulate sleep patterns.

4. Sheet Society Sleep Well Magnesium Balm, $30. Encourage your muscles to relax by massaging this balm onto the inside of your wrists, your palms and behind your ears.

5. Swisse Ultiboost Magnesium + Sleep Powder, $44.99. Try easing muscle cramps and restless sleep with a scoop of this powder in water. Its ingredients are traditionally used in Western herbal medicine to promote sleep and relaxation.

6. Caruso's Ashwagandha + Sleep, $39.95. This formula has ingredients that may help relieve symptoms of stress and mild anxiety, improving your sleep quality.

7. Kailo Sleep Well, $99. Set yourself up for relaxation with this chocolate-inspired blend of calming herbs, minerals and collagen peptides.

8. Ecosa Cooling Pillow, $200. With a cooling gel layer and cool-touch fabric, this memory foam pillow draws away heat, enabling you to enjoy sweat-free nights. ■

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better finance

[ANDREA BLACK HAS TIPS TO TAME YOUR WINTER ENERGY SPEND.]

SCAN ME
Scan the code for smart ways to stay warm.

Genius ways to cut your power bill

How to keep energy costs down and your cosiness levels up.

AVOID PAYING A LOYALTY TAX

You've probably noticed power providers offer great deals to lure in new customers, but that the price goes up after you're with them for a while. So, switch! It's actually easy to change providers and take advantage of a good offer. Of course, check your current plan first to see if any exit fees apply. The government's Energy Made Easy website can help. It compares offers from different companies so you can choose the best plan for you. Grab a recent bill and try it out. It only takes three minutes. Go to **energymadeeasy.gov.au**.

CHECK YOUR BILL

Don't just look at the total on your power bill. Check if the reading is an estimate based on your past consumption or an actual meter reading. If the bill seems steep and it's an estimation, you can call your provider and request a special meter reading. Pay particular attention if you have been away during the past quarter. Also check if there is a "Better Offer" listed on your bill. Your provider is legally required to let you know if there's a cheaper plan available. Just change plans and save money!

TRAP THE HEAT

Do you have bare wooden, tile or concrete floors? Use rugs to add insulation. On windows, put up thermal curtains or honeycomb blinds, or tape bubble wrap or cardboard over the glass. Cuddle up to some targeted warmth, too, with an electric throw rug. It uses less energy than a heater, which needs to work hard to heat a large space.

> IF WE COMMAND OUR WEALTH, WE SHALL BE RICH AND FREE. IF OUR WEALTH COMMANDS US, WE ARE POOR INDEED.
>
> **EDMUND BURKE, ANGLO-IRISH POLITICIAN AND WRITER**

Electric Bi

APPS TO TRACK POWER USE

Download from the App Store or Google Play.

LIGHT BULB SAVER

This app helps calculate how much cash you can save by replacing your current lights with energy-efficient alternatives. (App Store only.)

POWERPAL

See how your energy use changes when you turn home appliances on and off in real time. You'll need to plug a Powerpal energy monitor into your smart meter for it to work (monitor is free in Victoria; about $129 elsewhere). Details at **powerpal.net**.

AGL APP

AGL customers in NSW, VIC, QLD, SA and WA can track their hourly and daily consumption, compare energy usage over the past 12 months and enter meter reads with this app. It also shows how much energy your solar panels export or your home battery's charge. ■

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This financial information is general in nature and does not take into consideration your personal circumstances. If you need advice, please seek out a licensed financial adviser.

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better books

[RACHEL IORFINO FINDS AN ENDURING WARMTH IN THESE COSY READS.]

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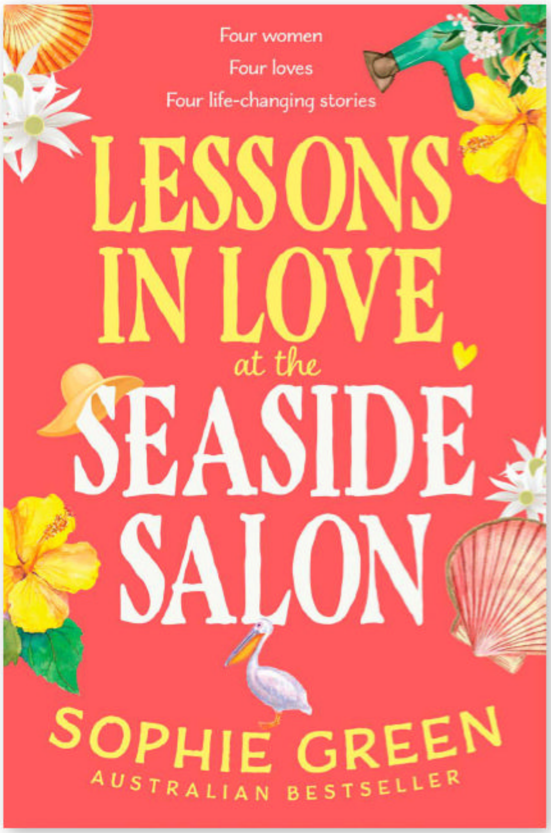

Four women
Four loves
Four life-changing stories
LESSONS IN LOVE at the SEASIDE SALON
SOPHIE GREEN
AUSTRALIAN BESTSELLER

TOP READ

LESSONS IN LOVE AT THE SEASIDE SALON

by Sophie Green, Hachette Australia, $34.99

The annual winter chill has really set in (at least it has where I am). It's the season I crave spending an afternoon wrapped in a cosy, comforting read, and *Lessons in Love* is definitely one of those books.

If you need a novel with a bit of heart and lots of romantic toil, you'll thoroughly enjoy Sophie Green's latest release. It follows four women whose stories intertwine at a hairdressing salon in Terrigal on the NSW Central Coast in the 1980s.

While Green includes the rom-com basics, with happy endings all around, there are deeper elements that can't be written off as easy reading. You'll witness first love, unrequited love, forgiving love and grieving love, all in one book. It's love in all its forms, and I certainly shed a tear or two by the last chapter.

> “READING THIS BOOK WAS LIKE SNUGGLING BENEATH A WARM BEACH TOWEL AFTER A BRACING DIP IN THE OCEAN.”
>
> JOANNA NELL, AUSTRALIAN NOVELIST

PEOPLE'S CHOICE

THE BOOKSHOP DETECTIVES: TEA AND CAKE AND DEATH

by Gareth Ward and Louise Ward
Penguin, $34.99

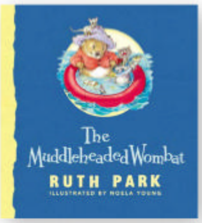
GARETH WARD & LOUISE WARD
The BOOKSHOP DETECTIVES
TEA AND CAKE AND DEATH

As the sequel to one of 2024's best-selling books, I had high hopes for this one and, boy, did it deliver! If you love whodunnits, quirky Kiwi characters, the cutest rescue dog and a whole lot of suspicious food poisonings, you'll be obsessed with this story.

THE COMFORT READ

THE MUDDLEHEADED WOMBAT

by Ruth Park
HarperCollins, $17.99

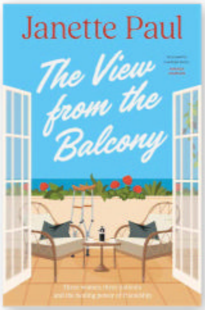

The Muddleheaded Wombat
RUTH PARK
ILLUSTRATED BY NOELA YOUNG

When I think of ‘cosy’, I immediately call to mind the stories of *The Muddleheaded Wombat*, which I read as a child. Ruth Park created three inquisitive characters – Wombat, Tabby Cat and Mouse – who work together to solve disasters that occur (usually by their own hand). This paperback has four of her classic books in one volume.

MAKES YOU THINK

THE VIEW FROM THE BALCONY

by Janette Paul
Pan Macmillan, $16.99


Janette Paul
The View from the Balcony

Hope overcomes all – even awful hospital coffee – in Janette Paul's uplifting tale. Three women of different generations connect on a balcony in a rehab hospital as their loved ones and colleagues recover. The strangers become friends and their mutual support grows. ■

Prices are approximate and a guide only.

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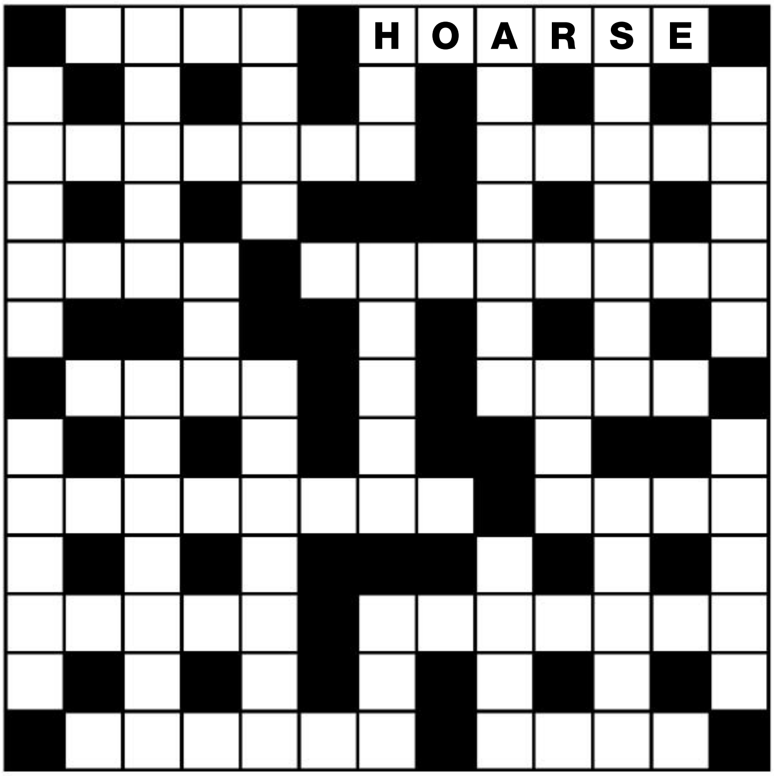
Turn the page to find a sample of our latest brain teasers to keep you entertained during the cosy season.

1 Fill-in



There are no clues to this crossword. All you have to do is fit the listed words into the grid. We've filled in one word to help you get started.

3 LETTERS
DOE
EGO
HAY
HOW

4 LETTERS
DEFY
HAWK
KNEW
MAID
OBOE
REEL
SPED
TOLD

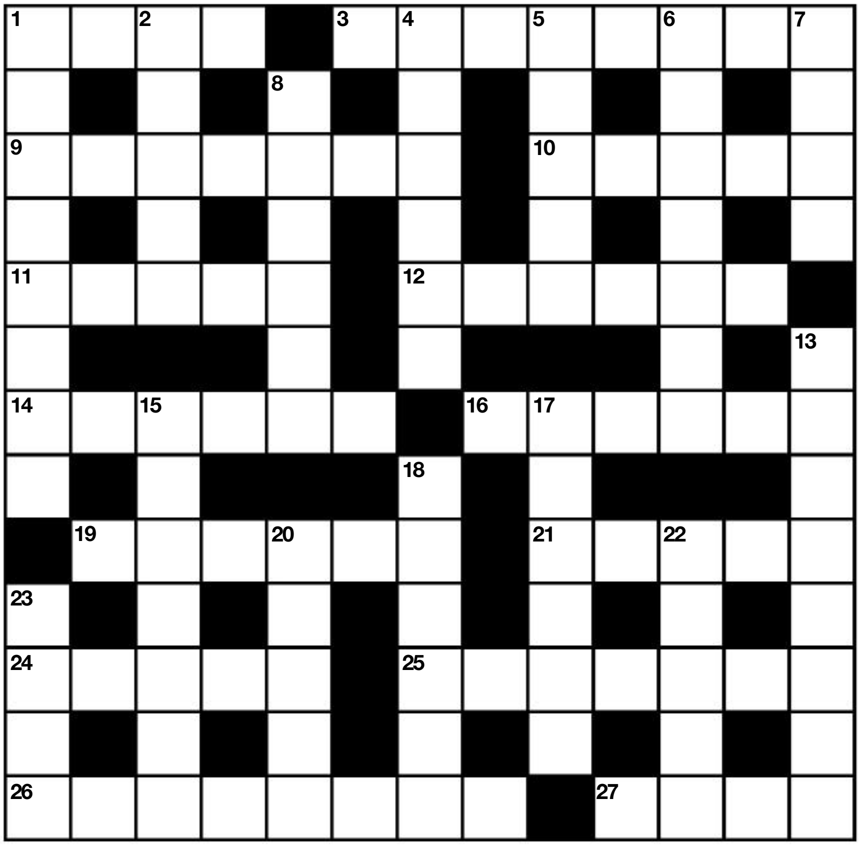
5 LETTERS
AURAL
AWASH
BRIEF
DESKS
MAPLE
NEIGH
OVATE
STAGE
VALET

6 LETTERS
BESTOW
~~HOARSE~~

7 LETTERS
ADMIRER
DIALECT
HEATING
PARTAKE
SUPPOSE
VARIETY

8 LETTERS
OVERLOOK
WARRANTY

2 Easy cross



You should be able to whiz through this easy crossword in no time at all!

ACROSS
1 Covering for the face (4)
3 Viewed momentarily (8)
9 Canberra NRL team (7)
10 Animals living in a pride (5)
11 Stops, ceases (5)
12 Sharp surgical tool (6)
14 Feeling of disquiet (6)
16 Susie ---, actress in *Wentworth* and *Gold* (6)
19 Straw hat with a flat hard brim (6)
21 Satisfies one's appetite (5)
24 Metal pin or bolt for holding plates together (5)
25 Pickled cucumber (7)
26 Metallic stands in a fireplace (8)
27 Gratis, without charge (4)

DOWN
1 Joyous, jolly (8)
2 Food for pigs (5)
4 Finally (6)
5 Lyndey ---, Australian food and wine expert (5)
6 Earliest (7)
7 Cooking vessel (4)
8 Survey of population (6)
13 Attendance (8)
15 Developed gradually (7)
17 Pearl-producing mollusc (6)
18 Mythical fire-breathing reptile (6)
20 Private instructor (5)
22 One who accepts an offer or challenge (5)
23 Australian music award (1,1,1,1)

FOR SOLUTIONS TURN TO PAGE 186

3 Word search

Look for the Australian universities in the list below. They can all be found in the grid reading in straight lines, in any direction, and letters may be used more than once. Happy hunting!

WORD LIST

ADELAIDE
BOND
CANBERRA
CHARLES DARWIN
CHARLES STURT
CURTIN
DEAKIN
EDITH COWAN
FEDERATION
FLINDERS
GRIFFITH
JAMES COOK
LA TROBE
MACQUARIE
MELBOURNE
MONASH
MURDOCH
NEWCASTLE
NOTRE DAME
RMIT
SWINBURNE
SYDNEY
TASMANIA
TORRENS
UNSW
VICTORIA

N	I	W	R	A	D	S	E	L	R	A	H	C	E	F
A	R	H	Q	A	I	N	A	M	S	A	T	E	K	E
W	U	E	N	R	U	O	B	L	E	M	L	D	O	D
O	A	N	Q	S	N	E	R	R	O	T	C	I	O	E
C	R	R	S	O	V	O	B	Z	S	H	U	A	C	R
H	R	U	A	W	R	I	T	A	A	H	R	L	S	A
T	E	B	Z	T	Y	Y	C	R	M	C	T	E	E	T
I	B	N	B	I	M	W	L	T	E	O	I	D	M	I
D	N	I	V	U	E	E	L	T	O	D	N	A	A	O
E	A	W	Y	N	S	Q	T	I	M	R	A	A	J	N
A	C	S	S	S	Y	D	N	E	Y	U	I	M	S	S
K	S	H	T	I	F	F	I	R	G	M	N	A	E	H
I	O	U	X	J	G	G	S	R	E	D	N	I	L	F
N	R	L	A	T	R	O	B	E	I	Q	G	H	I	I
T	D	N	O	B	C	E	I	R	A	U	Q	C	A	M

4 Code cracker

Each number in this crossword represents a different letter of the alphabet. We've given you three letters to get you started. Write these letters wherever their corresponding numbers appear in the grid and you should be able to work out what some of the other letters are. Use the letter checker to keep track of the letters you've decoded. All 26 letters of the alphabet are used in the grid.

1		14	C
2		15	
3		16	
4	N	17	
5		18	
6		19	
7	M	20	
8		21	
9		22	
10		23	
11		24	
12		25	
13		26	

■	13	22	15	6	16	20	■	20	25	23	18	21	20	16
■	3	■	25	■	22	■	■	■	4	■	25	■	■	5
17	22	4	11	■	16	19	25	5	8	■	2	6	18	8
■	15	■	6	■	9	■	14	■	2	■	4	■	8	■
6	4	14	3	7	21	■	26	22	25	1	7	6	15	21
■	21	■	■	■	4	■	22	■	8	■	3	■	6	■
20	8	9	21	■	11	15	6	9	■	20	2	6	14	21
■	■	■	12	■	■	■	16	■	■	■	21	■	■	■
13	3	5	21	15	■	17	6	18	7	■	15	22	23	8
■	10	■	15	■	23	■	20	■	3	■	■	■	3	■
24	22	14	14	19	6	4	6	■	16	9	19	6	4	12
■	18	■	6	■	16	■	10	■	21	■	21	■	25	■
18	21	1	16	■	26	22	21	18	18	■	18	6	4	5
25	■	■	21	■	22	■	■	■	18	■	18	■	24	■
9	25	15	16	18	21	8	■	17	21	11	3	15	25	■

5

High fives

From the letters of the words given below, form six five-letter words to fit the grid. Four letters have been placed to give you a start, and here is a clue to the first word across: Go crimson with embarrassment.

WORD LIST

O~~V~~ER
SLI~~G~~HT
HAIL
~~B~~IBS
~~S~~UN

	■	S	■	
			B	
V	■		■	
		G		

6

Six by two

The six-letter answers to these clues have been split in two and listed to the right of the grid. Can you solve the clues by putting the words back together? When the grid is complete, transfer the letters to the appropriate boxes in the lower grid to discover a language.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

1B	2F	3C	4E	5A	6C

1 Simply or hastily executed drawing
2 Promptly, quickly
3 --- Heslop, character played by Toni Collette in PJ Hogan's 1994 film
4 Mended socks
5 --- Merkel, former German chancellor
6 Underground passage for cars

WORD LIST

ANG
DAR
ELA
IEL
MUR
NED
NEL
NTO
PRO
SKE
TCH
TUN

7

Word smith

How many words of FOUR or more letters can you find in this grid? Each letter can only be used once and every word must contain the centre letter. Foreign words and proper nouns are not allowed. Can you find the nine-letter word?

R	W	A
R	E	I
H	D	D

Your goal this puzzle: **70 WORDS**

FOR SOLUTIONS TURN TO PAGE 186

8 Jigsaw

We've taken a symmetrical puzzle and cut it into 45 pieces.
Your task is to put the puzzle back together.

A	B	R
I	■	■
L	■	C

■	A	■
O	N	S
■	C	■

E	■	■
■	■	A
S	C	R

P	E	C
A	■	O
R	■	U

N	G	E
■	■	R
G	■	B

■	■	S
W	■	■
A	G	E

E	■	■
S	■	■
S	T	U

R	V	E
■	■	P
■	■	I

O	■	■
N	■	V
D	I	O

O	V	E
M	■	■
I	S	H

T	■	O
■	■	■
N	C	L

P	L	U
■	■	R
S	O	N

■	■	I
■	■	B
T	L	E

L	■	P
K	O	O
W	■	C

I	■	E
L	■	■
M	A	N

E	■	U
L	■	M
L	U	E

■	■	O
D	■	S
W	A	T

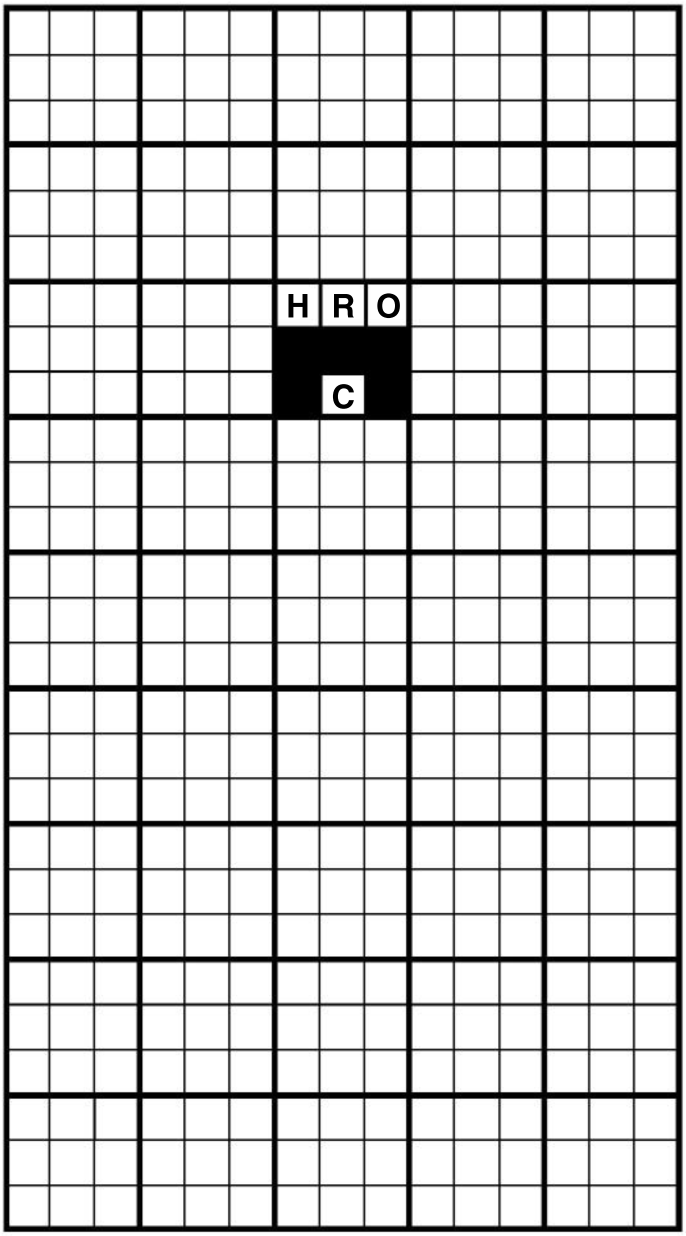
U	N	F
E	■	■
S	■	■

■	H	■
E	E	T
■	E	■

■	N	■
■	■	■
E	R	Y

E	■	T
■	■	O
M	L	Y

R	T	S
■	■	O
■	■	D



W	■	D
I	■	■
P	O	L

■	T	■
■	I	■
N	O	W

■	Z	■
C	U	C
■	R	■

O	■	G
L	■	U
A	T	E

O	R	G
■	■	■
D	■	F

C	H	A
H	■	P
■	■	E

L	E	R
■	■	O
D	■	A

P	■	T
O	N	I
R	■	C

R	E	S
E	■	■
Q	■	■

O	A	D
D	■	■
O	A	L

■	I	■
I	V	I
■	E	■

D	E	T
R	■	■
I	■	T

R	I	M
■	N	■
H	A	I

■	■	R
■	■	T
N	C	Y

M	O	K
■	M	■
■	B	■

T	A	L
■	■	E
N	■	■

B	S	E
E	■	S
E	■	C

T	■	I
■	■	L
O	L	L

T	I	L
■	■	U
F	I	R

A	C	H
Y	■	■
■	■	K

I	■	■
O	■	■
N	E	G

A	I	R
B	■	T
L	■	■

Supercross

This giant crossword is sure to give your vocabulary a thorough workout.

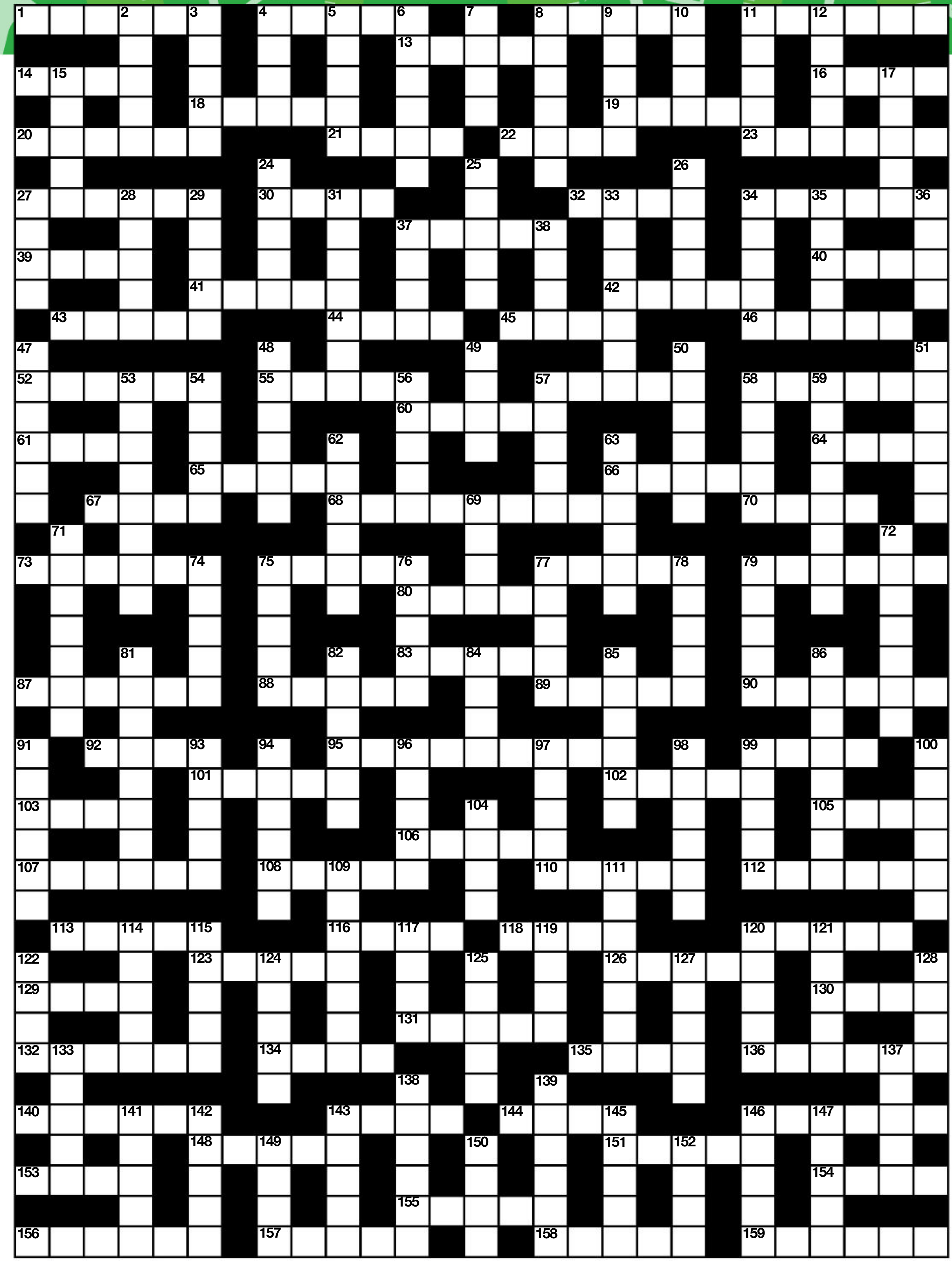
ACROSS

1 Marionette (6)
4 Thread, filament (5)
8 Dizzy (5)
11 NYC transit system (6)
13 Picture (5)
14 Labyrinth (4)
16 --- Driver, *House of Gucci* star (4)
18 Remain upright (5)
19 Cancel (5)
20 Long-eared hound (6)
21 Fencing sword (4)
22 Greasy (4)
23 Over there (6)
27 Planks (6)
30 Shapely fruit (4)
32 Worry (4)
34 David ---, former vice-captain of the Australian national cricket team (6)
37 Pig's nose (5)
39 Placid, serene (4)
40 Prisoner's room (4)
41 Genuflected (5)
42 Muggy (5)
43 Feed on grass, as sheep and cattle do (5)
44 Manual organ (4)
45 Free from danger (4)
46 Shake the shoulders as a sign of indifference (5)
52 Undamaged, complete (6)
55 --- Johnson, former UK PM (5)
57 Change, adjust (5)
58 Building or room for gambling (6)
60 Game played on a board of 64 squares (5)
61 Compass point opposite to west (4)
64 Indian princess (4)
65 Stir up (5)
66 Foot joint (5)
67 Area of mown grass (4)
68 Distances north or south of the equator (9)
70 Cut with scissors (4)
73 Blue ---, Australian cattle dog (6)
75 Strong metal (5)
77 Rough estimate (5)
79 European country, capital Stockholm (6)
80 As great as, matching (5)
83 Fills fully (5)
87 Disengage, break off (6)
88 Pass laws (5)
89 Avoid work or responsibilities (5)
90 More profound (6)
92 Eyre or Burley Griffin, eg (4)
95 Tautened (9)
99 Uttered, spoke (4)
101 Humiliate, abash (5)
102 Giggle (5)
103 Road division (4)
105 Unconscious state (4)
106 Pursue, run after (5)
107 Except in case that (6)
108 Follow on from (5)
110 Rim, brink (5)
112 Pluck eyebrows (6)
113 --- Golightly, 98D role (5)
116 Let out breath audibly, in tiredness or relief (4)
118 Common cat's name (4)
120 Electrical weapon (5)
123 Small map inside a larger one (5)
126 Book material (5)
129 Tiny particle (4)
130 Indian city, location of the Taj Mahal (4)
131 Weary, fatigued (5)
132 Burial cloth (6)
134 Eight plus one (4)
135 Untidy state (4)
136 --- *Street*, long-running children's show (6)
140 --- wheel, amusement park ride (6)
143 Short comic play (4)
144 Isn't (slang) (4)
146 High-pitched cry (6)
148 Consumed (5)
151 Send (5)
153 Fishing lure (4)
154 Wrongfully assist (4)
155 Banishment (5)
156 Mass departure of people (6)
157 Canadian territory (5)
158 Frock (5)
159 Spud (6)

DOWN

2 Rinds (5)
3 Put faith in, believe (5)
4 Cheese used in Greek salad (4)
5 Flat cutting part of a knife or sword (5)
6 --- Tower, Parisian landmark (6)
7 Profit (4)
8 Pet which is similar to a hamster (6)
9 Decompose (5)
10 Knitting wool (4)
11 Sorrowfully (5)
12 Muscular power, as opposed to brain (5)
15 Texan battle site (5)
17 UK pop singer with the album titled *30* (5)
24 Rod or bar forming part of a wheel (5)
25 Serving of ice cream (5)
26 Water vapour (5)
27 At someone's --- and call, ready to obey (4)
28 Cuban dance (5)
29 Chimney emission (5)
31 One more (7)
33 Wealthiest (7)
34 Vocabulary items (5)
35 Happen again (5)
36 Depend on (4)
37 In a short time (4)
38 Food fish (4)
47 Movie theatre (6)
48 Ancient calculating device with rows of wires along which beads are slid (6)
49 Beasts of burden (4)
50 Beverages (6)
51 Sport of propelling a boat with oars (6)
53 Really, truly (8)
54 Sharp projection on a plant (5)
56 Fragrance (5)
57 Requested (5)
58 Grottos (5)
59 Sieve (8)
62 Assisted (6)
63 Squandered (6)
69 Bean curd (4)
71 Betwixt (7)
72 Small stones (7)
74 --- Lauren, fashion company (5)
75 Bondservant (5)
76 Smallest in amount or significance (5)
77 Drinking receptacle (5)
78 Plant stem (5)
79 Tell off, berate (5)
81 Language spoken in Tokyo (8)
82 Increase speed (6)
84 Diplomacy (4)
85 Centre (6)
86 Average in quality (8)
91 Bravery (6)
93 Merits, deserves (5)
94 --- Nadal, Spanish tennis player who won the 2022 Australian Open (6)
96 Poise, elegance (5)
97 Desert region in southern Israel (5)
98 --- Hepburn, star of *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and *Funny Face* (6)
99 Upper body garment (5)
100 Suspenders (6)
104 Young sheep (4)
109 Strengthen or support physically or mentally (7)
111 Short period of rest or relief (7)
114 Indefinite state (5)
115 Give in, surrender (5)
117 Covered thinly with gold leaf (4)
119 Second-hand (4)
120 Groups of three (5)
121 Exchanges (5)
122 Strait separating Tasmania from the Australian mainland (4)
124 Animal that releases a noxious smell when threatened (5)
125 Wander, roam (5)
127 Non-poetic writing (5)
128 Bogus, sham (4)
133 Scavenging animal (5)
137 --- Binchy, late Irish author (5)
138 Concealed (6)
139 Walked sideways (6)
141 Ranked, assessed (5)
142 Appears to be (5)
143 Light meal (5)
145 Armistice (5)
146 Strip of leather (5)
147 Cook in an oven (5)
149 Neat, well-ordered (4)
150 Journey (4)
152 The Red Planet (4)

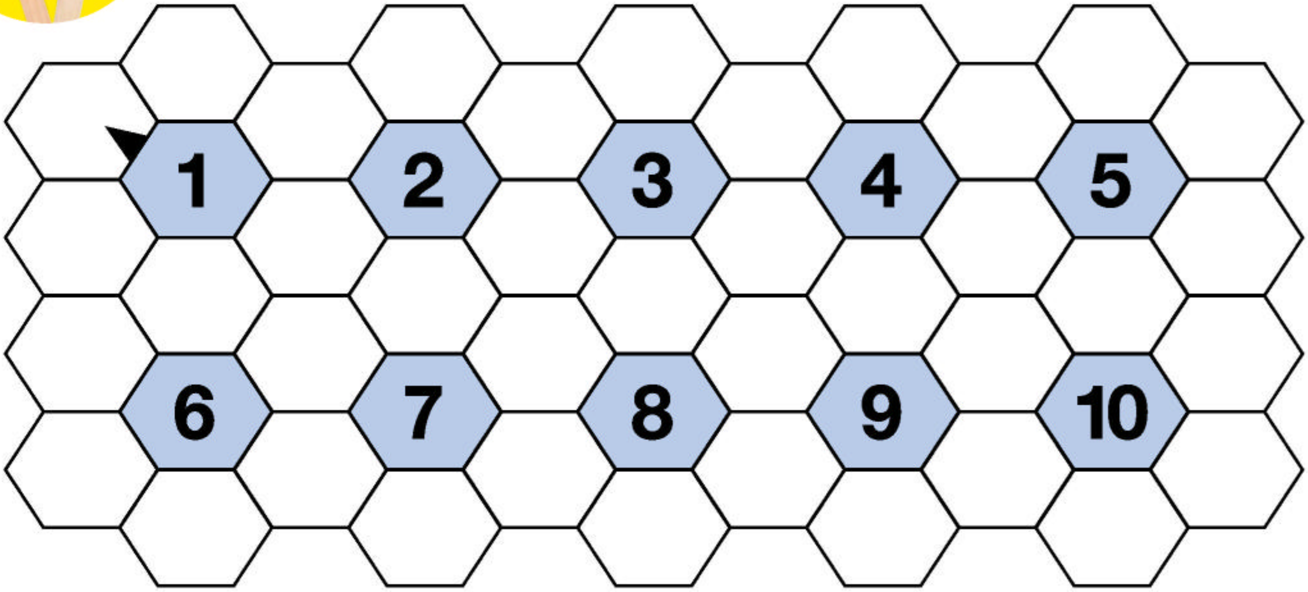
FOR SOLUTIONS TURN TO PAGE 186



10

Honeycomb

Each of the clues in this puzzle has a six-letter answer. Write the answers clockwise in the spaces around the appropriate numbered hexagon, starting at the one marked by the pointer.



CLUES

1 Able to express oneself easily and articulately in another language
2 Referee, line judge
3 Smoked herring
4 Feeling of reassurance after feeling anxious or stressed
5 Resistant to a particular disease due to specific antibodies
6 River flowing from the Peruvian Andes through Brazil to the Atlantic
7 Go looting or pillaging, plunder
8 Coffee liqueur
9 Anew, again
10 --- *Family*, TV show starring Sofia Vergara, Julie Bowen and Ed O'Neill

11

Sudoku

Each row and each column of the grid and each 3 x 3 box must contain all the numbers 1–9.

	1	5		3			7	
9					7	1		
6	7			8	2			
	2		4	1				
		1				8		
				7	6		3	
			8	2			5	4
		4	7					2
	5			4		9	8	

12

Sudoku

Each row and each column of the grid and each 3 x 3 box must contain all the numbers 1–9.

7	8		9				2	6
5			2		1			
				6		5	9	
	9	2						
		5		7		8		
						2	6	
	3	7		5				
			1		6			5
1	5				8		4	3

FOR SOLUTIONS TURN TO PAGE 186

Recipe wordsearch

First of all, find all the words highlighted in **blue** in this recipe in the wordsearch grid. You'll find them reading in straight lines – horizontally, vertically or diagonally – in either direction. Some letters may be used more than once. Then you can have a go at the recipe!

APPLE & BERRY CRUMBLE TARTS

Preparation and cooking time: 15 minutes. Makes: 12

¾ cup (190g) firmly packed canned pie apple
1 tsp caster (superfine) sugar
1 tsp finely grated lemon rind
½ cup (75g) frozen mixed berries, thawed
¾ cup (80g) crispy oat clusters
10g (½ oz) butter, melted
1 tbsp honey
12 x 4cm (1½ in) mini pastry shells
Whipped cream, ice cream or custard, to serve

STEP 1 Combine pie apple, sugar, lemon rind and berries in a medium bowl.

STEP 2 Combine oat clusters, butter and honey in a small bowl.

STEP 3 Preheat a 7-litre air fryer to 180°C/350°F for 3 minutes.

STEP 4 Spoon apple mixture into pastry shells and top with oat cluster mixture.

STEP 5 Taking care, place tarts in the air fryer basket; at 180°C/350°F, cook for 5 minutes or until golden.

STEP 6 Serve crumble tarts with cream, ice cream or custard.

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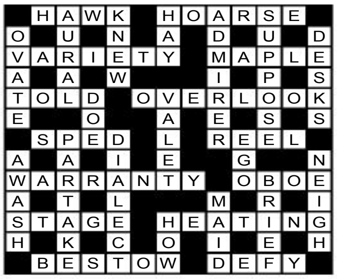
R	A	G	U	S	P	R	E	P	A	R	A	T	I	O	N	C	L	Y	D	V
R	G	N	F	S	V	E	Q	E	E	D	W	B	Y	M	A	T	I	Z	R	A
O	X	O	I	O	U	B	L	T	E	P	B	K	A	N	A	A	T	G	A	K
M	V	M	N	O	O	P	S	T	R	U	S	K	N	O	D	K	N	K	T	B
I	C	E	E	E	P	A	L	L	T	C	E	E	T	E	I	I	U	O	S	A
X	R	L	L	A	C	E	B	T	P	S	D	U	K	H	K	N	U	W	U	S
T	I	B	Y	R	M	S	E	M	A	E	R	C	X	O	A	G	R	Y	C	K
U	S	W	P	E	I	R	R	E	S	E	A	C	O	G	Q	W	E	I	G	E
R	P	H	D	Y	N	E	R	C	T	P	H	C	C	W	R	N	E	O	N	T
E	Y	I	L	R	U	T	I	A	R	S	L	E	S	F	O	A	L	D	I	D
R	U	P	L	F	T	S	E	L	Y	W	K	N	R	H	I	D	T	R	V	V
M	B	P	A	K	E	U	S	P	O	S	F	O	B	P	E	R	X	E	H	H
G	F	E	M	N	S	L	Q	B	P	N	Z	E	A	N	Q	L	M	G	D	O
H	E	D	S	A	T	C	S	U	P	E	R	F	I	N	E	T	L	L	F	L
U	C	R	U	M	B	L	E	E	N	I	B	M	O	C	I	Q	I	S	Y	T

Solutions

You've put in the hard mental work and now it's time to see if you came up with the correct answers!

1 FILL IN

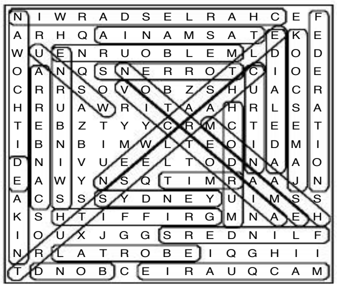


2 EASY CROSS

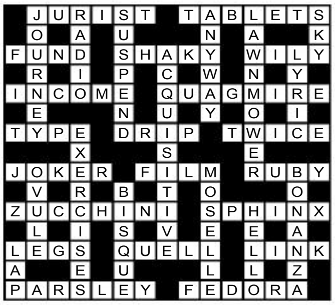
Across: **1** Mask, **3** Glimpsed, **9** Raiders, **10** Lions, **11** Halts, **12** Lancet, **14** Unease, **16** Porter, **19** Boater, **21** Sates, **24** Rivet, **25** Gherkin, **26** Andirons, **27** Free.

Down: **1** Mirthful, **2** Swill, **4** Lastly, **5** Milan, **6** Soonest, **7** Dish, **8** Census, **13** Presence, **15** Evolved, **17** Oyster, **18** Dragon, **20** Tutor, **22** Taker, **23** ARIA.

3 WORDSEARCH



4 CODE CRACKER



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
G	W	O	N	K	I	M	Y	P	V	D	X	J
14	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**	**20**	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25**	**26**
C	R	S	F	L	H	T	E	U	B	Z	A	Q

5 HIGH FIVES

B	L	U	S	H
R	■	S	■	O
A	L	I	B	I
V	■	N	■	S
E	I	G	H	T

6 SIX BY TWO

1 Sketch, **2** Pronto, **3** Muriel, **4** Darned, **5** Angela, **6** Tunnel.

Hidden language: Korean

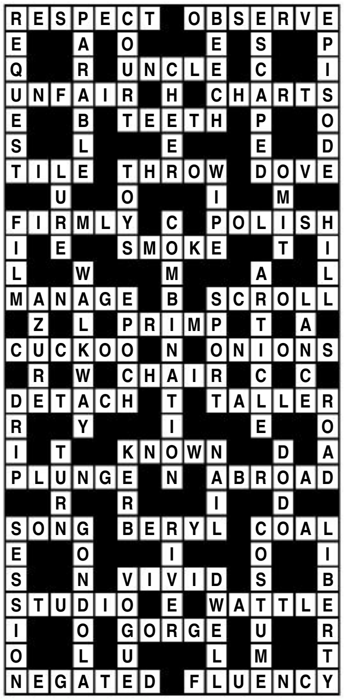
7 WORD SMITH

Possible answers include:

Adder, Aide, Aided, Aider, Aired, Airer, Awed, Dare, Dared, Darer, Dead, Dear, Died, Diehard, Dire, Direr, Drawer, Dread, Drear, Drew, Dried, Drier, Hade, Haded, Harder, Hardier, Hardwire, Hare, Hared, Harried, Hawed, Head, Hear, Heard, Heir, Herd, Hide, Hided, Hider, Hied, Hire, Hired, Hirer, Idea, Raided, Raider, Rare, Rawer, Rawhide, Rawhided, Read, Rear, Redia, Redid, Redraw, Reward, Rhea, Ridder, Ride, Rider, Wadder, Wade, Waded, Wader, Warded, Warder, Ware, Wared, Warier, Warred, Wear, Weir, Weird, Whirred, Wide, Wider, Wire, Wired, Wirer, Wrier.

Nine-letter word: Hardwired

8 JIGSAW



9 SUPERCROSS

Across: **1** Puppet, **4** Fibre, **8** Giddy, **11** Subway, **13** Image, **14** Maze, **16** Adam, **18** Stand, **19** Annul, **20** Basset, **21** Epee, **22** Oily, **23** Yonder, **27** Boards, **30** Pear, **32** Fret, **34** Warner, **37** Snout, **39** Calm, **40** Cell, **41** Knelt, **42** Humid, **43** Graze, **44** Hand, **45** Safe, **46** Shrug, **52** Intact, **55** Boris, **57** Alter, **58** Casino, **60** Chess, **61** East, **64** Rani, **65** Rouse, **66** Ankle, **67** Lawn, **68** Latitudes, **70** Snip, **73** Heeler, **75** Steel, **77** Guess, **79** Sweden, **80** Equal, **83** Sates, **87** Detach, **88** Enact, **89** Shirk, **90** Deeper, **92** Lake, **95** Tightened, **99** Said, **101** Abase, **102** Laugh, **103** Lane, **105** Coma, **106** Chase, **107** Unless, **108** Ensue, **110** Verge, **112** Tweeze, **113** Holly, **116** Sigh, **118** Puss, **120** Taser, **123** Inset, **126** Paper, **129** Atom, **130** Agra, **131** Tired, **132** Shroud, **134** Nine, **135** Mess, **136** *Sesame*, **140** Ferris, **143** Skit, **144** Ain't, **146** Shriek, **148** Eaten, **151** Remit, **153** Bait, **154** Abet, **155** Exile, **156** Exodus, **157** Yukon, **158** Dress, **159** Potato.

Down: **2** Peels, **3** Trust, **4** Feta, **5** Blade, **6** Eiffel, **7** Gain, **8** Gerbil, **9** Decay, **10** Yarn, **11** Sadly, **12** Brawn, **15** Alamo, **17** Adele, **24** Spoke, **25** Scoop, **26** Steam, **27** Beck, **28** Rumba, **29** Smoke, **31** Another, **33** Richest, **34** Words, **35** Recur, **36** Rely, **37** Soon, **38** Tuna, **47** Cinema, **48** Abacus, **49** Oxen, **50** Drinks, **51** Rowing, **53** Actually, **54** Thorn, **56** Scent, **57** Asked, **58** Caves, **59** Strainer, **62** Helped, **63** Wasted, **69** Tofu, **71** Between, **72** Pebbles, **74** Ralph, **75** Slave, **76** Least, **77** Glass, **78** Stalk, **79** Scold, **81** Japanese, **82** Hasten, **84** Tact, **85** Middle, **86** Mediocre, **91** Valour, **93** Earns, **94** Rafael, **96** Grace, **97** Negev, **98** Audrey, **99** Shirt, **100** Braces, **104** Lamb, **109** Sustain, **111** Respite, **114** Limbo, **115** Yield, **117** Gilt, **119** Used, **120** Trios, **121** Swaps, **122** Bass, **124** Skunk, **125** Stray, **127** Prose, **128** Fake, **133** Hyena, **137** Maeve, **138** Hidden, **139** Sidled, **141** Rated, **142** Seems, **143** Snack, **145** Truce, **146** Strap, **147** Roast, **149** Tidy, **150** Trip, **152** Mars.

10 HONEYCOMB

1 Fluent, **2** Umpire, **3** Kipper, **4** Relief, **5** Immune, **6** Amazon, **7** Maraud, **8** Kahlua, **9** Afresh, **10** *Modern*.

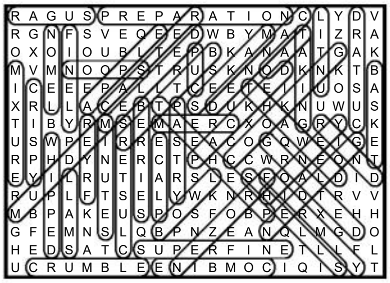
11 SUDOKU 1

2	1	5	9	3	4	6	7	8
9	4	8	6	5	7	1	2	3
6	7	3	1	8	2	4	9	5
3	2	7	4	1	8	5	6	9
5	6	1	2	9	3	8	4	7
4	8	9	5	7	6	2	3	1
1	3	6	8	2	9	7	5	4
8	9	4	7	6	5	3	1	2
7	5	2	3	4	1	9	8	6

12 SUDOKU 2

7	8	3	9	4	5	1	2	6
5	6	9	2	8	1	3	7	4
2	4	1	3	6	7	5	9	8
6	9	2	8	1	3	4	5	7
4	1	5	6	7	2	8	3	9
3	7	8	5	9	4	2	6	1
8	3	7	4	5	9	6	1	2
9	2	4	1	3	6	7	8	5
1	5	6	7	2	8	9	4	3

13 APPLE & BERRY CRUMBLE TARTS WORDSEARCH



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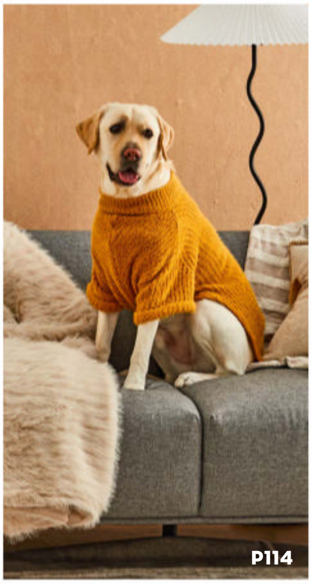
P114

P120

SWEATER WEATHER, PAGE 114

Shopping details

Bauwerk Colour Medlar limewash paint (used on wall), 1L, $49.50. **Lifely** Mellow rug, $149. **Target** Mabel faux fur throw in Natural, $50. Westley braided throw in Neutral, $50. Anko Riley wave floor lamp, $52. Sofa and cushions, stylist's own.

A NOVEL TWIST WITH ADAM, PAGE 120

Shopping details

Bauwerk Colour Medlar limewash paint (used on wall), 1L, $49.50. **Lifely** Mellow rug, $149. Porter's Paints Stone Paint Fine in Irish Linen (used on skirting board), 4L, $159.90. **Target** Mabel faux fur throw in Natural, $50. Sofa, cushions, books and accessories, stylist's own.

Project supplies

Bunnings Ecoply 2400 x 1200mm 19mm plywood pine structural CD Grade, $105. Porta 12.5 x 12.5mm round dowel grandis 2.4m, $11. Dulux 1Step Prep primer, sealer and undercoat, 500ml, $36.50. Porter's Paints 1L Aquasatin enamel washable paint in Hamptons Blue, $74.20. Cabot's Cabothane Clear matt water based polyurethane varnish, 1L, $61.90. Adoored 300mm 225kg Lazy Susan bearing plate, $15.75. Titan 12g x 50mm 304-grade stainless steel decking bugle screws, 25 pack, $10.95. Surface Gard 76mm beige round felt floor protection, 4 pack, $6.40. ■

Prices are approximate and a guide only.

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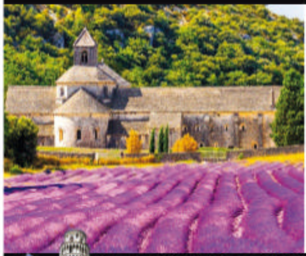

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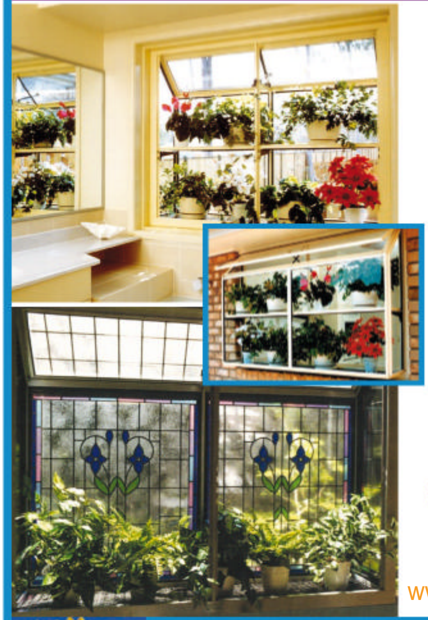

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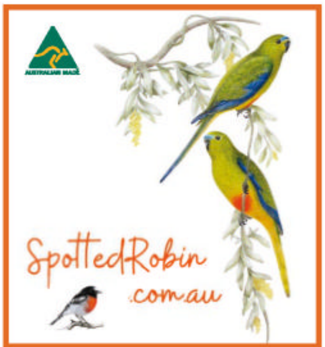

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11-12 JULY | WOOLGOOLGA, NSW
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Learn the art of candle making at the Woopi Bee Shed in Woolgoolga. You'll go from hive to final creation in one three-hour morning session. At day's end, you'll have a suite of candles to burn when the sun sets early.

2

Winter Mug Making Class with Mulled Wine

JULY-AUGUST, SATURDAYS | SOUTH FREMANTLE, WA | TICKETS FROM $119

Turn nature's shapes into your own art with a winter mug-making class. Collect your favourite leaves and flowers and create imprints in your very own mug. You'll get a glass of mulled wine and extra nibbles to keep the creative juices flowing! (Mugs are fired and ready to collect in four weeks.)

3

Festival of Voices

JUNE 27-JULY 6 | TASMANIA
FREE AND TICKETED EVENTS

The Festival of Voices is celebrating its 20th anniversary with events across all of Tassie. It celebrates the power and sheer fun of singing. You can book into workshops, take part in music trivia nights, listen to fabulous voices and choirs or join a singalong.

4

Jumpers and Jazz in July

JULY 17-27 | WARWICK, QLD
FREE AND TICKETED EVENTS

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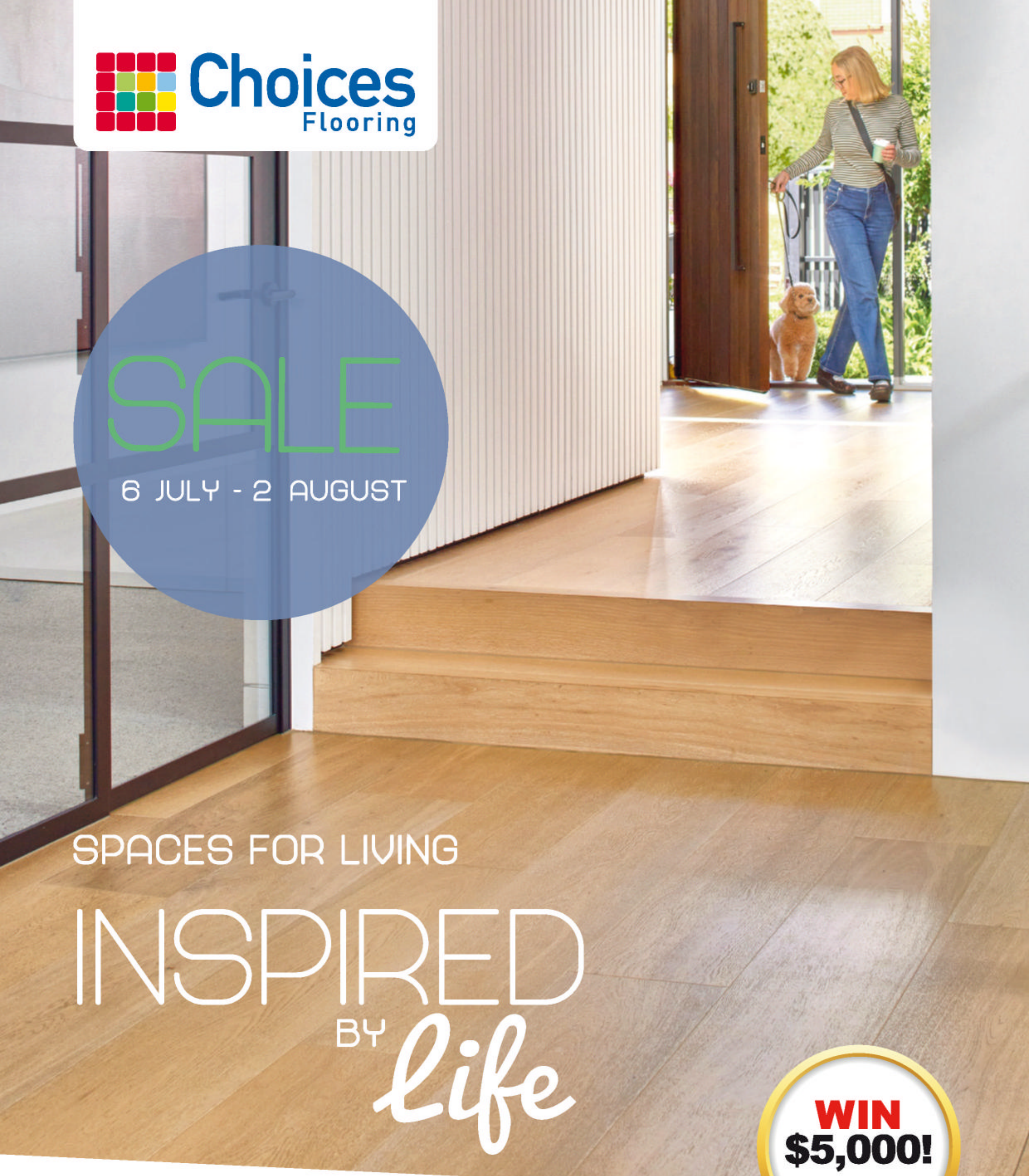

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